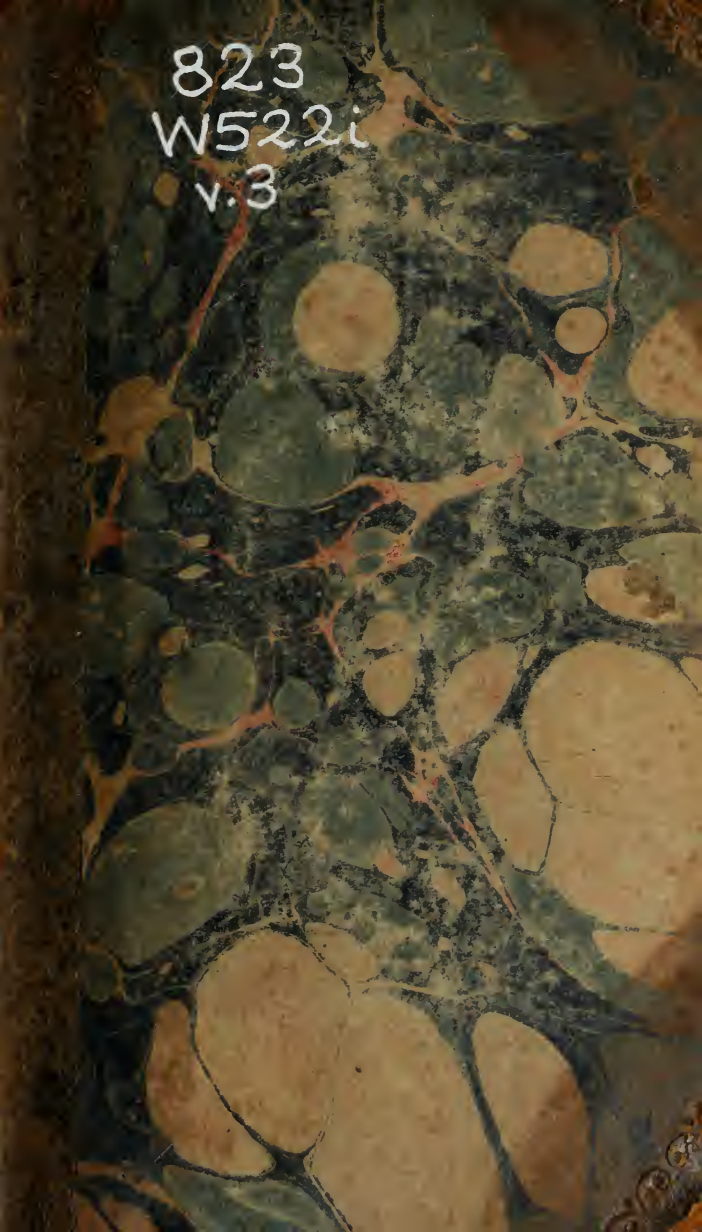


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THE
INFIDEL FATHER;

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"A TALE OF THE TIMES," "A GOSSIP'S STORY," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
Which stoops to court a character from man:
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
Far more than man, with endless praise or blame.
YOUNG.

LONDON:

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THE
INFIDEL FATHER.

CHAP. XXII.

People are not always made happy by having their own Way. Miss Glanville is introduced to the great World.

THE expectations which Mr. Brudenell had formed of Sophia's conduct were amply realized by her subsequent deportment. No fullen gloom, no pensive languor, no start of wayward spleen, disclosed the anguish of the love-lorn maid to ridicule or commiseration. She thought the sorrows of her heart too sacred to be obtruded on observation; and, convinced that she should have hours enough for silent grief, she parted with it at her chamber-door, and seemed

during the long course of her *active* day only to live for others. So perfect was her equanimity, that if her dim eye and pallid cheek had not disclosed the traces of unobserved tears, and borne witness to the waste of sleepless nights, the whole neighbourhood would have been compelled to observe, that either Lord Selborne's visits to Gianville castle had been to no purpose, or that an *heir-ess* was soon consoled for the absence of a favoured swain. Doubts, however, gained ground, and were strengthened by suspicious circumstances. She was observed to change colour on hearing a gentleman offer to bet great odds, that not one in ten of those *devoted* troops who were sent on this *forlorn hope* business would ever return to Old England. She always strove to turn the conversation when Lord Glanville inveighed against professional murderers; and, as she burst into tears at a lively description of the horrors of an engagement, *very discern-*
ing

ing people saw how it was: Cupid's darts had been shot obliquely. Selborne loved Caroline, Caroline preferred Raymond, and poor gentle Sophia was enamoured with Selborne. I must add, that all the *prudent* part of these *very discerning* people when they found that Sophia would be the greatest fortune, wondered why the above young officer did not immediately transfer his heart, in full integrity, from the lady who had jilted to the lady who admired him.

Such of my readers as are strangers to the Elysian delights of a rural residence cannot easily perceive how infinitely we simple country folk are obliged to any of our neighbours, who happen to be so obliging as to do any thing extraordinary, by way of giving us a little variety. The calm atmosphere which we gentle spirits inhale, not being exposed to the vicissitudes of a London climate, is apt to stagnate; and were it

not for the salutary agitation of a little harmless scandal, and a few wholesome tempests, would soon become fatally deleterious to all, except to those non-descript beings, who are so perfectly insensible of adventitious circumstances that they can exist in a vacuum. A private ball has been known to save half a county from such an immoderate fit of yawning, that people grew apprehensive of locked jaws; and I once remember the whole circle of my acquaintance in just such a melancholy state as is reported to succeed the touch of a torpedo. The infectious listlessness increased to that degree, that their charmed tongues grew listless, like the scold's at the command of Mercury*, and the card table was totally deserted; when an eminent medical character, perceiving that this universal stupor proceeded from too great a

* See Dryden's comedy of *Amphytrion*; near the end of the second Act.

degree

degree of quiescence, out of pure humanity imported the plague from the coast of Barbary, planted it in the West of England, and registered fifteen funerals in a large manufacturing town in one night. This kind expedient operated as an electric shock. You could not pass a person in the street who did not stop you with an anecdote about the pestilence; and, though conversation was for some days confined to ipecacuanha, thieves' vinegar, and smoked tobacco, every one found the advantage of being liberated from that non-descript monster *ennui*, who tyrannizes over all that have not courage to make the bold experiment of depending upon themselves for amusement.

But to return to Lord Glanville:—Anxious to complete all his plans, as well those that related to the disposal of Sophia, as those on which he proposed to build the proud edifice of political

greatness, the earl took advantage of a faint glimmering of renewed health, to introduce his heiress to the great world. Various reasons induced him to wish that Mr. Brudenell would *not* accompany them: he knew that that gentleman would never enter into his views; he was awed by his integrity, and dreaded his mild but firm opposition. Supported by the presence of the kind guardian of her youth, he thought it possible, that even the *timid* Sophia might assume courage to resist his arbitrary mandates; but he doubted not, if the "subtle priest," as he termed him, were removed, that the artless girl would be either entangled in his snares, or awed by his frowns.

He had recourse, therefore, to his old devices; and, by seeming to think with Mr. Brudenell on every subject, insinuated to that gentleman that his presence could be no longer necessary. Pursuing this scheme, the earl talked
with

with much sage prudence of the dangers incident to a young woman's first appearance in public ; spoke of his perplexity about choosing a proper chaperon ; cordially acquiesced in Mr. Brudenell's recommendation of Lady Susan Wilson ; and observed that before he last left England, she was universally spoken of, as a woman who acted with uniform propriety, and took her share of life's gay scenes with unaffected moderation. He declaimed against those parents who busy themselves in finding out what they call *matches* for their offspring ; observed that the heart of a young person could not be expected to be in unison with the head of an old one ; and that for his own part, though Mrs. Raymond seemed to suspect a violent interposition of his authority, he had laid it down as a positive rule, never to proceed further than a recommendation, or an intimation of disapproval. Ever since Sophia

B 4

had

had become an inmate of his family, Lord Glanville had *tricked* out his threadbare garb of deism with the *trimming* of religious observance. He constantly listened while grace was said ; had a sermon read every Sunday evening, while he dozed on the sofa ; and not only turned away a footman for parodying the bible, but actually threatened to go to church two Sundays ; though, I own, his pious intentions were frustrated by confounded east winds and infernal damps. If all this goodness was not sufficient to dupe one priest, the earl thought the times must be sadly altered from what they were in his youth, when a lord's jest, a lord's smile, or a lord's bow, carried with them irresistible fascination.

I must observe, however, that it was beyond Lord Glanville's power again to impose on Mr. Brudenell ; who, while he regulated his own conduct by christian simplicity,

simplicity, regarded that of others with minutely attentive circumspection. He had, indeed, many professional motives which induced him to return to his own quiet parsonage; he placed the firmest confidence in Sophia's prudence; and considered, that it would be unwise to irritate Lord Glanville, by obliging him constantly to associate with a man whom, notwithstanding the smooth polish of courtly manners, and the overwhelming officiousness of exuberant friendship, an accurate observer could perceive he both dreaded and detested. Mr. Brudenell, therefore, determined to decline the earl's invitation to Portland Place. Much regret was expressed on the side of the nobleman, and many low bows proclaimed the clergyman's humility and gratitude; the latter continued most firm in his resolution to return home; and in proportion as he kept steady, the

hospitable earl grew more urgent in his solicitations.

The evening previous to the breaking up of the family party, Lord Glanville turned the conversation to his daughter's conduct, whom he now constantly called Mrs. Raymond; while Sophia, with equal pertinacity, preserved her appellation of Lady Caroline. "Jervais," observed the earl, "generally amuses me with a little chat while I am dressing. The fellow has lived with me many years; he is much attached to my welfare; and you know, Mr. Brudenell, when people mean well, we overlook natural deficiencies. He read me out of a morning paper, a description of a gala that the Raymonds have just given. He knew my liberality, and that I should not be displeased with what some masters would have thought sheer impertinence. Mrs. Raymond dashes in a high style.
Her

Her person and manners are much admired, I hear: I am glad of it with all my soul; there is not the least trait of malevolence in my disposition. It is thought that he courts popularity with a view to a seat on the treasury bench; and I shall congratulate ministry if he succeed in his views. He will do the greatest honour to their patronage; for I could sign testimonials in favour of his adroitness, his versatility, his consummate integrity, and his gratitude. Hey Sophia! I may vouch that Raymond is ready to betray any *benefactor*, may I not?"

"I think his behaviour," said Miss Glanville, "can only admit of one excuse. Hurried on by his passion for Lady Caroline, he lost sight of those principles which ought to have regulated his conduct."

"You girls," returned Lord Glanville, "can generally make excuses for mad lovers. Jervais tells me, that the

Raymonds are most primitively happy. I suppose you expect that they are so."

"I think, my lord," answered Sophia, "that if I were Lady Caroline I could not be happy till you had forgiven me."

"Then you would die wretched," said the affectionate father, with a voice like thunder.

"I hope not," replied Miss Glanville with one of Sophy Aubrey's smiles; "for though I could not urge *one* plea in extenuation of my fault, I am sure that your heart would in time relent, and feel compassion for an offending child."

"What pleas," said the earl, "can *illegitimacy* urge to cancel base ingratitude? The rights of bastardy are not acknowledged by either divine or human laws. I beg pardon, Mr. Brudenell, I trespass upon your functions; but I conceive that you would say I was guilty of
I *injustice,*

injustice, if I felt the same strong tie to my illegal offspring, that I do to my lawful issue."

Perceiving that Mr. Brudenell was going to make a serious answer to this strange appeal, the earl thought it would be as wise to continue talking, to prevent him; and he proceeded to state his own conduct, till he really made himself out, not only to be a blameless, but an *exalted* character. Though, to a person who has been used to call actions by their proper names, such an undertaking may seem impossible; yet that happy inversion of language which has been introduced by false philosophy, and adopted by false refinement, is so rich in expletives, so happy in transposition, so acute in syllogism, so calculated

"——to steal upon applause,

"And give false vigour to the weakest

"cause, ——"

that

that no character need despair of being covered over with a neat coat of innocent whitewash. Give the proficient of this art a proper auditory, and I am convinced that they will make fixturing Jack a man of inflexible integrity, and Mrs. Brownrig a model of *mild* humanity. Lord Glanville had only to disguise, omit, mis-state, and draw his own inferences, and his whole history wore a new aspect. He became the best of husbands, the kindest of fathers, the most obedient of sons, the victim of paternal prejudice, the dupe of O'Faughn's villainy, a passive though afflicted witness of Lady Caroline Lewson's shameful conduct, cheated by the avarice and base suspicions of her father, and made wretched by the constant vigilance which her daughter's levity and violent temper required. In fine, not a seducer, not an infringer of the criminal laws of his country, not an unprincipled hypocrite,
not

not a specious infidel, but a very worthy man, ill used by every body. Having completed his own apotheosis, declared that honour and justice, "the gods of his idolatry," forbade him to hug ingratitude and infamy to his bosom, and again announced Sophia not only as his heiress, but his sole dependance and hope, he hastily retired, leaving Mr. Brudenell and Miss Glanville petrified and silent, not from conviction, but astonishment.

"Oh sir!" said Sophia, "surely you ought to have endeavoured to tear the veil from the eyes of this unhappy man. How dangerous is such self-flattery! He *believes* himself an injured character, instead of repenting of his vices."

"No, my love," returned Mr. Brudenell; "he has no veil before his own eyes, he only wishes to throw one on ours. Conscience is not so unequal to the duty imposed upon it by the Author of Nature, as to permit atrocious offend-

ers

ers to disguise their iniquities to themselves. Whenever you hear a bad man gloss and varnish his misdeeds, remember that his secret pangs have forced him to seek for the empty acquittal of credulity or flattery, and to apply it as balm to the wounds of his lacerated soul. It may be generous to attempt to argue such a person into the confession of his faults, but the design is rarely successful; for the criminal is already more deeply sensible of his offences than you are; and all he aims at is, to gain a transient forgetfulness of his misdeeds, by triumphing over your simplicity. The best course that we can pursue is, to shew these unhappy sophists that they have lost their labour, and to yield them that compassion which is always due to the most atrocious wickedness."

"You are right," returned Sophy.
"O my more than parent! my monitor, my friend, my best counsellor,
my

my kindest protector ! how shall I act without you in the new and dangerous scene on which I am going to enter ? ’

“ Well, I doubt not,” was Mr. Brudenell’s answer ; “ because you are truly diffident and unaffectedly religious. But when you want my assistance remember that mine is ‘ a green old age’, and like a lusty winter, frosty, but kindly. I am fully able to endure fatigue whenever you require my attendance.”

“ But tell me,” continued Miss Glanville, “ how must I behave to Lady Caroline Raymond if we happen to meet ? ”

“ Ask your own heart, or I should rather say your judgment.”

“ Then I shall strive to return the kindness which she shewed me, when I was trembling with apprehension at being first acknowledged by Lord Glanville.”

“ And

“ And you will act rightly. When I endeavoured to restore you to your inheritance, I never wished to behave *unjustly* to that lady. I knew that you had a son’s claim on the Glanville fortune; and though the law, which cannot accommodate itself to every possible contingency, would not acknowledge her right, I thought that justice decreed Lady Caroline a daughter’s share. I have not forgotten the noble disinterestedness which she shewed on that occasion. I am convinced that she bears you a real sisterly affection, uncontaminated by envy or jealousy. She has a great but perverted mind, and a generous though impetuous disposition. Had proper principles been early instilled into her soul, had she been treated with frankness and integrity, we should not now be lamenting her imprudence, but *revering* her as an ornament to her sex.”

Sophia

Sophia wiped away the tear of amiable sensibility, and gave her heart-felt assent to Mr. Brudenell's observations. She then expressed her firm determination, if ever she became mistress of Lord Glanville's fortune, to make the equitable distribution which Mr. Brudenell advised. To this declaration she added a kind wish, that she could as easily relieve her from all the other misfortunes which would probably follow her unfortunate choice.

"Folly and obstinacy," returned Mr. Brudenell, "must meet with those chastisements which are not only the punishment, but the natural consequences of their offences. We cannot change the course of nature, my child. Weeds will sprout on a rich neglected soil; and they who punish themselves, to be revenged of others, must be contented with the portion that they have chosen. I once had great hopes of Lady Caroline;
line;

line; her mind seemed to open to a consciousness of the beauty of true goodness; she told me that she would honour me with her confidence; nay she even solicited my advice. Fearful of alarming her pride, and offending her impetuosity, I spoke with caution; yet I thought that what I said had the desired effect. From what I then saw of her heart, I am convinced that the arts of Raymond would never have been successful, nor would she have become the wife of that most abandoned man, had not her father's duplicity piqued her lofty spirit into a rash and fatal opposition."

"Raymond really is very worthless?" inquired Sophia. "I had hoped that he was only a fortune-hunter, an indolent man of the world, without vice."

"You have described the soil," replied Mr. Brudenell, "in which vice naturally grows; and must we not look
for

for it there? A man will never set up for a fortune-hunter, till he has renounced that manly integrity of mind which prompts him to pursue competence by laudable means. A man will not be an idle dependant, till he has sacrificed all regard to truth, all pretensions to self-esteem, all relish for disinterested friendship, and all respect for the opinion of the world. Take the *voluntary beggar* out of this state, bewilder his weak head with a sudden influx of wealth, give him that consequence to which he has often cringed; and if he had never before shewn a propensity to those vices, he will become vain, tyrannical, dissipated, and extravagant. The tone of his mind is broken; he has lost all taste for real dignity, and will look for it in ostentation. He has been trained in servility, and therefore can never feel gratitude, which is the virtue of a mind that has been taught

taught by self-exertion to know the value of the favours it has received.

“ I have been assured,” continued Mr. Brudenell, “ that Lady Caroline already has cause to subscribe to the truth of the well-known maxim, that the favours which female weakness bestows are soon forgotten. Raymond publicly neglects, nay *ridicules* his wife. He is one of those flashy characters, whose pretensions to gentility consist in a good air and a happy style of expressing a circumscribed round of good things. A man of so limited a capacity always confounds vice with fashion ; believes himself a man of the world, because he dares to be audacious in guilt ; and very scrupulously avoids all those good qualities that are sure to be satirized when urged to excess. Mr. Raymond, I am told, is terribly afraid of being thought a fond, grateful husband ; and is so very desirous that people should

should forget whose fortune he is spending, that he takes care never to be seen with the person from whom he received it. Lady Caroline at present preserves the look of happiness; her beauty and her wit attract general admiration; her parties are the largest in town; her box at the opera is crowded with the most elegant men; she is the fashionable chaperon, and boasts that she has her choice of cecisbeos. This may do for a little while, Sophy; and her pride may preserve her from plunging into the gulph of infamy. But when we recollect the step which revenge prompted her to take, to what have we to look forward?"

"Oh no," cried Sophia, "now you do look too far. She is a woman of the strictest virtue, and has the most delicate sense of female honour."

"Unsupported," resumed Mr. Brudenell, "by those considerations on which all human virtue must depend, or

else be the house founded upon sand, that will soon be swept away by winds and waves: you know that I mean a conviction of the constant presence of the Deity, and the certainty of our being accountable creatures. But it grows late. Farewell my best beloved. Impress those two awful truths upon your soul, and your errors will not be numerous, nor *irretrievable*."

Most of my *haut ton* readers will be prepared to expect that a young lady educated in retirement, by what they will call a *twaddling parson*, (I think it wise sometimes to give a specimen of my own *polished breeding*,) must be guilty of many shocking mistakes on her being introduced into the very first circles. Yet the annals of the Glanville family do not authorize me to state any very terrible misadventures which followed Sophia's *débüt*. I have not been able to discover that she got into any scrape
about

about partners at gala balls ; that she ate what was in season at petit soupes ; that she trod upon the draggled train of a dutchess at a picture gallery ; that she bruised the toe of the lord in waiting when she was introduced ; that she omitted to return cards or calls at the exact hour ; curtesied to the lady of a city baronet before she returned the congée of a viscountess ; went full dressed to a quiet party of a few hundreds ; or, finally, that she walked five at Ranelagh. Some of these offences she avoided by the address of her chaperon ; the astonishing intelligence of her groom of the chambers preserved her from others ; and the acuteness of her own capacity enabled her so far to catch the manners of the day, as to avoid very gross errors. I am afraid, however, that she was not so far cured of the *naïveté* of a country education, as to have been able to conceal her sympathy at a *good* tragedy, or to

have avoided laughing at strokes of wit and humorous traits in a *genuine* comedy. But as these kind of exhibitions are *absolutely out*, Miss Glanville had no occasion to study any painful command of her features for the theatre. She went there, when a fashionable piece was performed, with her head very well dressed; she looked very pretty, heard all the fine things that were said by fine people, and returned home as well amused as she expected.

One crowded court-day, as she waited under the piazza at St. James's till her chair was called, a young man addressed her chaperon, whom if she had met at a public place in the country she would have set down for an ill-bred boor. His dress was shabby, dirty, and slovenly; his expressions were coarse, his voice loud; and, while seeming to tap his own boots carelessly with his cane, he ingeniously contrived to break the jonquils
on

on Lady Susan's trimming, and to dirty her crape petticoat. She soon found by the ease with which that lady endured this disaster, and by the style of her replies, that this gentleman was a nobleman; and she soon caught the title of Lord Montolieu, whom she knew to be the Adonis that gave ton to the gay world, and the Sejanus who agitated the political. His lordship was just lamenting, in a strain of ironical distress, a confounded sprained ankle that deprived him of the happiness of a two-hours squeeze in the drawing-room; when, for the first time perceiving Sophia, he inquired in a loud whisper, who that divinity was. Lady Susan, with a little visible pique at this very high-bred effrontery, informed him that it was Miss Glanville. The marquis instantly changed his tone and manner, requested to be introduced, and expressed the most profound regard for the earl, who had

been his father's most intimate friend. He regretted that his arrival in town had been too recent to permit him the honour of waiting upon his lordship; but, as his impatience to renew the family intimacy was most ardent, he should seize the earliest opportunity of paying his devoirs. He now offered to escort the ladies through the crowd, led Sophia to her chair, and left her as much astonished at his elegant address, as she had been before shocked at his vulgarity.

She could not help communicating her surprize to Lady Susan; who, after condemning the perverted ambition which can teach an hereditary guardian of the state to seek distinction by assuming the appearance of a butcher, added, "But such is the fashion of the day. Montolieu idolizes popularity. He must be the *first* in every thing. He must keep the latest hours, have the lowest carriage, sport the most *outré* liveries,

liveries, frequent the most extravagant clubs, make the longest speeches, and, to crown all, be the worst dressed, and when *necessary* the rudest man of quality in England."

"But why change his manners so much when he addressed me?" inquired Sophia.

"Are you ignorant," said Lady Susan, "not only that I am not high ton, but also of your own future destination? You are to be marchioness of Montolieu."

"I a marchioness?" exclaimed Miss Glanville, shrinking back at the terrifying suggestion. "Never! Impossible!"

"No, not *quite* impossible," replied Lady Susan. "You are a rich heiress; and I believe Montolieu has found pre-eminence in taste an *expensive* indulgence. Beside, he is the head of a party, and, it is whispered, is willing to vacate that honour in favour of a venerable re-

lation of yours, who wishes to breath out his last sigh, like Cobham, in "Oh save my country, heaven!"

“I perceive,” returned Sophia “that you are laughing at my vanity; and I will own that I deserved it for being so foolish as to suppose that the marquis’s change of manner was any thing more than accidental. But come, dear Lady Susan, be merciful, and I will never more give you reason to suspect that I think myself an Iphigenia transforming a Cymon.”

Lady Susan observed, that she was the most reasonable beauty she ever met; and, complimenting her *penetration* with an arch smile, withdrew.

Looks and gestures are said to be more intelligent than language: I am not a thorough convert to that opinion; for I conceive that winks, nods, smiles, bows, shrugs, and shakes of the head, are capable of an infinite variety of ex-

10 planations;

planations ; and I have often seen people who are distinguished by very superior penetration mistaken in their interpretation of the above signs, that I have given over troubling myself about what I consider to be at best equivocal. Had Miss Glanville possessed *my* self-command in this instance, she would not have tormented herself about the meaning of Lady Susan's smile. Now, whether this said important contraction of that lady's muscles boded any thing, and *what* it boded, the invariable rules of this species of composition, which decree that nothing very important shall pass unexplained, require me to disclose in the following pages.

CHAP. XXIII.

Some Prognostics that this Work will have a Conclusion. A Lady may be positive without being in high Heroics.

THE dear FitzJohns (my readers will allow me to indulge myself in the use of that tender epithet) had partaken of the general delightful consternation into which the rescue and elopement of Lady Caroline, and the subsequent acknowledgment of Miss Glanville, had plunged the whole county of ——. Female passions have not that saturnine determined cast which those of the superior sex have; and there is generally more entertainment than anxiety in pursuing their variations. Now, though Lady Fitz-John was once the chosen “love” of
Lady

Lady Caroline, and could scarcely bear to sit near Sophia for fear of contamination, attachments may change, and averfions may fubfide, when circumftances vary : that is to fay, when the firft lady became fo dreadfully indecorous, and the birth of the laft was cleared from all *imputation*, a perfon of Lady FitzJohn's abundant delicacy was juftified in changing fides ; and the yielding unimpaffioned Melifandriania was equally willing to become the grand-mamma of Sophy, as fhe had been to be the ftep-mother of Caroline. Indeed, fo determined was her refolution in favour of Lord Glanville, that nothing in the world could change it, but a conviction that he would not give her the propofed jointure, or an *immediate* and *explicit* declaration on the part of Sir Bronze.

I am forry to obferve, that though the latter gentleman had now refided fome months in Sir Peter's family, he

had not yet been prompted by any high heroic sentiment to relieve Lord Glanville from the meditated attack, by drawing the whole fury of the besieging army upon himself. An exceedingly bad run of luck at the gaming table had made him rather out of cash, and very well satisfied with living upon Sir Peter till fresh remittances should arrive ; that is to say, till he could settle with the Jews how much they would give him for his reversionary chance to the estate of his maiden aunt, who was then in the sixty-first year of her age, of a strong constitution, and remarkable for the soundness of her lungs ; or till his steward could persuade the purchasers of his last-felled oak-saplings, to give him the price of forest trees, through a promise of being *favoured*, when he pulled down the family house, with the sale of the materials. Perfectly sensible that the company of a man of fashion was full indemnity

indemnity to a *bourgeois*, Sir Bronze felt excessively comfortable. He constantly pulled all the dishes at dinner out of their places, helped himself to a plate of each, which he sent away as soon as he tasted it, squinted at the claret, smacked the champagne, picked his teeth, swore at the servants, and, in fine, was, as Lady FitzJohn desired he would be, *quite at home*.

In vain did Melisandriana warble, spout, paint, languish, laugh, and satirize her neighbours. In vain did madam gently hint, that, as her daughter was now grown up, she was desirous of forming a proper connexion for her; in vain was it suggested, that a nobleman of distinguished rank and immense fortune, but *rather* past the bloom of youth, was known to entertain the most decided predilection for her, which the young lady, delicate even to excess, sometimes feared she could not return. Not-

withstanding several intimations, that if he did not speak soon she might be lost for ever, Sir Bronze remained silent as the grave, and only shrugged up his shoulders.

As every one knows that a fine gentleman in the country, when the hunting season has passed, is literally a fish out of water, they will conclude that our gay young baronet was as restless as was Æneas till the Sybil put him in possession of the golden bough, which was to transplant him to the Elysian fields. At length "honest little Moses" remitted him four thousand pounds, on condition of his making over his right of inheritance to all the estates of Miss Philida Harpy. The sum would have been larger, had not some rumours been afloat, that Miss Philida had just fallen in love for the *seventeenth* time, with a young ensign of family. This Moses called "taking a new lease of life, because," as he sagaciously observed,

“being in love seemed very salutary to the lady’s constitution.”

As the above sum would allow of a good dash while it lasted, Sir Bronze was impatient to emerge from his obscurity. The London winter was not quite over, and the star of Brighton was just rising in the horizon. Impatient of getting through the ceremony of taking leave, he *whispered* Melisandriana, the moment he received the drafts, that he had something very interesting to tell her; and hurried out of the room to arrange the preliminaries for his departure. The “lovely lass” smiled, blushed, and with proper decorum *whispered* mamma; who, transported a little beyond her usual prudence, again *whispered* her darling Artremidorus; who with a horse laugh announced it to the company present, consisting of all the gentle people of W——, invited to a little crash in order to amuse Sir Bronze. As
every

every body understood it in the way the young lady evidently did, numerous congratulations poured from every tongue; and the happy nymph smiled, adjusted her locket, and played with her fan in a most becoming manner. As the matrons universally agreed, that it would be proper to give the young lovers an opportunity for a little chat, Sir Bronze, on returning, found himself fixed to Miss FitzJohn for the rest of the evening. Whether he talked, walked, played, or sung, he was the wandering Cupid, and she the pursuing Psyche. The party at length broke up, and nods, winks, smiles, and whispers were universal. The latter generally consisted in "I admire your choice." "What an elegant man!" "How very sensible he is, and how genteelly negligent in his dress!" "Shall you have a public wedding?" and "Do let me be bride's maid," was the universal petition; to all which the
young

young lady, with a countenance bright as the morning star, gracefully assented.

But this radiant visage soon changed, when Sir Bronze, with a loud yawn and an execration of music, inquired whether his trunks were all packed up, avowing his determination to be off before breakfast. "Off!—where?"—was the terrified inquiry; and "'Pon my soul I neither know nor care," was the gracious reply. "What, leave us so soon!" said Lady FitzJohn in a most plaintive tone. "I fear, sir, something very disagreeable"—Sir Bronze gave her a slight nod, inquired into the state of the road, and, after a minute calculation, agreed that he could at the worst be in town time enough for dinner at the Marquis of Montolieu's. He then, perceiving that the whole family were pressing round him with questions, ordered a bed-candle; remarked that he should have a most fatiguing day to-morrow;

row ; avowed his intention of engaging in four walking matches, in order to reduce the gross vulgarity that he had acquired by fattening in the country ; and then, thanking Sir Peter for his hospitality, mentioned a hope that he might return it to himself, or any of his family. By shutting the door with a sliding bow in the midst of the last sentence, he contrived to render his invitation *unintelligible* to Sir Peter, though Lady FitzJohn distinctly heard the baronet express the strongest hope, that the ladies would instantly come to London, and favour him with their company at his town-residence.

Various were the sentiments that prevailed in the family council which sat for two hours on Sir Bronze's behaviour, without coming to any determination as to the report. I should rather say, without forming a majority ; for as the Lady President had given *her* opinion,

nion, it might be readily guessed what measures would be pursued. Sir Peter's sentiments were, that this said gentleman, instead of wishing to be his son-in-law, was neither better nor worse than a most iniquitous swindler. This Artremidorus denied, because he knew him to be descended from a good family, and had actually travelled over the estate that had long been possessed by Sir Bronze's ancestors. His explanation of his friend's behaviour was, that Melisandriana had either driven him mad, or violently offended him by her dawdling fondness, which, the kind brother hinted, often made him blush worse than Burgundy. The young lady protested that she never had the least notion of him in all her life, that she hated his very name, and hoped she should never set her eyes on him again. Lady Fitz-John settled all by observing, that she was sure something had put him out of humour.

humour. “ People of a certain rank,” said this candid casuist, “ are subject to embarrassments that the mercantile world cannot understand. Perhaps he may be anxious to secure a borough, or very likely he may have received overtures from administration. His declaration to Melifandriania is too explicit to need farther comment; and as she and I intend visiting him at his town residence, and rubbing off our rusticity with a little London energy, we shall soon soothe him into the most placid sensibility.”

In consequence of her ladyship’s humane design of softening the asperity of Sir Bronze’s political contests, and making him *very happy*, Lady FitzJohn only waited to hear that he had taken a very elegant ready furnished house, before she transplanted herself and her daughter from the cold ungenial shore of W—— to the rich cultivated soil of the metropolis, fruitful in every folly.

But

But how shall I describe the horrors of Sir Bronze, when, as he was indulging in the dear delights of Faro, in one of those haunts which, hid by worse than Egyptian darkness, justice has not yet explored, his faithful valet, Polish, (with a countenance

“ As dull and dead in look, as woe begone,”
as that Trojan’s who

“ Drew Priam’s curtains in the dead of night,
“ And would have told him half his Troy was
“ burn’d,”)

announced that the FitzJohns were arrived? Down dropped Sir Bronze’s extended arm; his countenance grew longer by several inches; and he repeated an execration against country cousins, which I always read once a month, as an antidote against that propensity for gadding about, which sometimes penetrates even the quiet walks of
Danbury,

Danbury, and makes me half inclined to shew my *antiquated visage* in London.

“How many are there of them?” inquired Sir Bronze in a tone of complete despondency.

“Only the two ladies, fir; but from the number of their trunks, either the rest of the party will follow, or these will stop till Michaelmas.”

“By Jupiter they will roast me alive! Keep me in London all July?”

“What the devil ails you, Harpy?” was re-echoed through the circle; who, as Sir Bronze had just punted with success, were at a loss to account for his visible despondency.

“Oh! worse than any thing the devil ever contrived. A country mayor’s lady and her daughter, whom I have just a cap-acquaintance with, have obtained forcible entry into my house in my absence.

fence. I expect that all the corporation are upon the road. Where have you left them, Polish?"

"In the drawing-room, sir, taking measure of the furniture. They say that they are tired to death with the journey; but they talk as fast as if they were just up. They have ordered roast chickens and asparagus for supper."

Sir Bronze absolutely stamped for madness at this intelligence. Chickens and asparagus, and a hot supper in May! At last one of his brother gamesters, Sir Timothy Daw, pitying his distress, dragged him aside, to ask him some interesting questions about Miss FitzJohn; and, finding that she was not only young and handsome, but expected to be a great fortune, he offered to give him five hundred pounds for a commendatory introduction. The baronet's aversion to his rural inmates now began to soften. He ordered Polish to give them a most
polite

polite reception, to serve up the chickens and asparagus in style, and to say that his master would have the pleasure of waiting on them the moment he had finished some important business which unavoidably detained him. He then returned to the Faro-table with fresh spirit, and with such good success that he returned home in amazing good humour ; but at so late an hour, that after many attempts to keep awake, and many lamentations at being spoiled by Sir Peter's horrid early hours, both the FitzJohns were obliged to submit, *reluctant* subjects, to tyrannical Morpheus.

I must here stop, and intreat my readers not to accuse me of egotism, though I should felicitate myself a little on the very ingenious adroitness with which I have dragged all my characters on the London stage, *preparatory* to the *closing* scenes of this eventful history. If I were not superior to all invidious exulta-

exultation, I might humbly hint that I manage these affairs in a much neater manner than many of my competitors. Some, perhaps, would have thought it necessary to train a dreadful banditti to plunder, and taught them to ravage the country till they had picked out my conspicuous personages one by one, and led them blindfold through subterraneous passages, till they all emerged into broad day-light at Charing Cross. Others would have dispatched a grim-visaged ghost to haunt all the rural halls and nodding castles, with orders to the inhabitants to repair to a *certain* house in St. James's street, where in a *certain* room they would be sure to find a *certain* sum of money, that had been lost by their ancestors on *that* spot. I might, indeed, have projected an invasion, and brought over troops of democrats in balloons, or diving-bells, to have driven all the aristocrats to one centre,

or

or I might have choaked up the mouth of the Thames with a Norwegian craken, and of course made every body come to look at it. Adhering, however, to the old Horatian principle, of never introducing great and supernatural agents but when no others can perform the business, I conceive that neither monster, ghost, nor banditti, are necessary to invite those people to London who have money to spend, consequence to acquire, or projects to complete. Therefore, as that busy spot is the centre of pleasure and enterprize, the Glanvilles, Raymonds, FitzJohns, and Harpys, arrived in town at the proper season.

It is not my intention to give a minute detail of all the gay scenes in which all the above *gay* people engaged. I hope that a silence which really proceeds from prudence, and an uncommon love of brevity, will not be considered

dered as the effect of ignorance or indolence. Those who have lived in the world well know the proper quantum of fatigue, hurry, anxiety, perturbation, and rivalry, which is wanted to form the precious mixture called *agreeable* dissipation; and, lest the calm bosoms of those people who have never tasted this choice *liqueur* should be agitated with an insatiable longing to possess it, I think it best for *their* sakes to describe pleasure under the image of a pretty butterfly, and the great world as full-grown children who are eagerly pursuing it. After many disputes, much labour, and frequent disappointments, it is at last caught; but then, lamentable to relate! the fine powder is rubbed off its wings, and it proves scarcely worth looking at.

Instead, therefore, of describing public parties, I shall return to private narrative. The Marquis of Montolieu

punctually fulfilled his engagement of waiting on Lord Glanville, found himself received with open arms, and quickly perceived the reserve incident to a new acquaintance give way to the strictest intimacy and the warmest friendship. He became the earl's morning intelligencer, detailed the particulars of the last night's debate, constantly attended Miss Glanville in public; and when her grandfather's health did not permit him to go out, unless some important business required his presence, he constantly domesticated himself with them on an evening. This kind of attention seemed to be an explanation of the meaning of Lady Susan Wilson's smile; but, as Sophia was ignorant how far the last edicts of fashion had extended the limits of *equivocal* gallantry, and as she was very unwilling that Lord Montolieu should believe her to be such a rustic as to suppose no man could be much in her

her

her company without being her lover, she thought it would be her wisest way to receive him with uniform politeness merely, as the friend of Lord Glanville.

The noble marquis had, however, very different views ; unless, a selfish design of liberating himself from many difficulties, by duping the vanity of another, may be esteemed a *significant* definition of modern friendship. A mutual confidant of these illustrious characters had reciprocally assured them, that an alliance between the houses would be mutually agreeable to each other ; and Lord Montolieu had only waited to see if Sophia was a being whom he could with any decency introduce as his wife, before he came forward with *positive* proposals. On his arriving in town he found her universally commended, for possessing beauty joined to unaffected

D 2 modesty,

modesty, and wit guarded by undeviating prudence. It is a wise maxim, to seek for those qualities in your partner, of which you are yourself most deficient ; and, as the noble marquis could not but be sensible that many eclipsed him in the articles of prudence and modesty, he resolved to choose a paragon in those particulars, and to *shine* by the *reflected* light of his marchioness.

To the Earl of Glanville nothing could be more welcome than the prospect of such a son-in-law as Montolieu. His declaration was received with every mark of benignity and satisfaction. Settlements were soon agreed on, and every arrangement necessary to the etiquette of a state-marriage finally determined. One trifling circumstance, indeed, was overlooked ; I mean the *consent* of the intended bride, who knew as little of her future destination, as Iphigenia when she saw the sacrificial

crificial pomp preparing, and asked her father if she might *see* the ceremony*.

This new method of making love may not be considered as an improvement upon the old system, nor am I very anxious that it should come into general use. It is sufficient for me to *prove*, that it corresponded with the characters of the earl and marquis. The former thought Sophia too gentle to resist authority, and too artless to withstand contrivance and surprize. He hoped that Selborne must be entirely forgotten; for of what use could three months spent in the hurry of the first circles be, if they could not eradicate the impression of six dull months passed in the country, and of every actor who figured in that limited scene. It is possible that Lord Glan-

* See Racine's Tragedy on this subject.

Iphigenia.—Say, will your family the altar grace?

You answer not.

Agamemnon.—My child, *thou* shalt be there.

ville strengthened his confidence by looking back upon his former life, and remembering that he had a peculiar knack at rendering innocence and simplicity subservient to his will. As for the marquis, like many other fine gentlemen, he knew himself to be *irresistible*. Sophia was a pleasing, artless little creature, who required no fatiguing attentions, and he lounged away the hours very *comfortably* in her company. The earl certainly wanted humouring as much as a baby; but as his coffers were well stored, and the girl was rational, it was possible to *endure* him. Lest the reader should suspect, however, that this noble lover was not sufficiently aware of his charmer's merits, I think it necessary to say, that he not only discovered them, but was resolved to make every body respect and admire her, when she became Marchioness of Montolieu.

Affairs growing toward a crisis, and the marquis intimating his hopes that the treaty might be brought to a speedy conclusion, the earl thought it time that Sophia should be apprised of their intentions. After a little flourishing prelude about his anxious concern for her happiness, which taught the trembling auditor what to expect, Lord Glanville expressed his thorough satisfaction at the *visible* preference which she shewed to Lord Montolieu; and declared, that he had been induced by her behaviour to give his consent to their immediate union.

Sophia started as if she had been stung by an adder, and with some energy protested that nothing was ever farther from her thoughts than giving encouragement to the addresses of the marquis. Lord Glanville's brow immediately became overcast, and he *commanded* her not to play off any female

artifices. "I have none, my lord," said Sophia, restraining the tear which she knew would be termed "dangerous and deceitful" drops of stubbornness and ingratitude. "To shew you my thorough contempt of coquetry, I explicitly declare, that I not only never considered Lord Montolieu as my lover, but that I never *can* regard him in that light."

"You can't?" exclaimed the haughty earl. "Then I suppose you can return to the beggary from which I have just snatched you?"

"Not unless you repent of your goodness to me," said Sophia with a look of pleading softness. "I do not wish to leave *you*, my lord. My attentions seem to have benefited your health; and I flatter myself that you will not absolutely forbid me to continue them."

"Art,

“ Art, cursed art !” said the earl ;
“ I have always been the dupe of art,
and the butt of obstinacy.” A pause
ensued, during which his lordship recol-
lected that he had made a memorandum
in his common-place book, that anger
was but a *clumsy* weapon, and should ne-
ver be had recourse to till all other me-
thods had failed.

Determined to renew the assault in a
more dexterous manner, his lordship
now complained of a stomach spasm ;
and observed, that his frequent infirmi-
ties made him petulant. No farther
hint was necessary to draw a sigh of pity
from Sophia’s gentle bosom, and to
bring her to the side of his chair, whence
his menacing frowns had just driven her.
“ Sit down,” continued he with increa-
sing gentleness. “ You are very good.
I own myself somewhat to blame, too
quick in my temper, unfortunately sin-
cere, unguardedly open ; but, as Mr.

Brudenell justly observes, we all have our failings."

A compliment to Mr. Brudenell was always sufficient to unlock Sophia's heart, and to make her forget how it was introduced. "Oh my dear lord," said she, "do not talk of my goodness. I will study better to deserve yours; only let us drop this painful subject."

"Right," returned the earl, "we will drop it. 'Tis distressing to us both. A softness of disposition was always one of my failings: but I wish you would *confide* in me, Sophia. If I have not yet done enough to deserve your confidence, point out how I should behave: I must complain of your reserves."

"I will have no reserves," said Sophia, "which you wish me to discard."

"Then suppose," replied Lord Glanville, "I put the case hypothetically; you observe; but don't answer me, if it gives

gives you pain. Perhaps your rejection of Lord Montolieu may proceed from a pre-engagement. Have you a more favoured lover, Sophia ?”

“ I would reject Lord Montolieu,” returned the young lady, “ if I had never seen—I mean if—Indeed, my lord, it does not proceed from any preference—I *do* dislike his lordship, and I—I have no pre-engagement.”

“ Very well,” answered the earl, grinding his teeth ; “ this is all frank and ingenuous. I disapprove of engagements, *unauthorized* engagements I mean. I see you are free to choose. Young ladies of fortune ever ought to consult family connexions. I own I was absurd enough to fear that the artifices of that despicable Selborne, [Sophia here turned pale,] who is the greatest villain that I know, except Raymond, [Miss Glanville was now forced to have recourse to her handkerchief,] might have seduced

D 6

duced you from the path of duty, as the other traitor did Caroline Lewson's daughter." His lordship's voice grew louder at every period; and Sophia interrupted him, by asking permission to withdraw. "No," said the earl with sarcastic fondness, "I cannot yet part with my dear, obedient, modest, prudent, ingenuous Sophy. I must first be assured that she has not *volunteered* her affections to a marauder; a slave, who has resigned the independence of his nature; an authorized plunderer; a butcher of the human race!"

"Whom," said Sophia, stopping as she had nearly reached the door, and assuming a look of dignified resentment, does your lordship mean?"

"Selborne."

"Then," answered Miss Glanville, with a calm but firm tone, "I have not *volunteered* my affections; but I own a preference for Lord Selborne?"

It was now the earl's turn to start. He was ill prepared for such a portentous aspect of *firm* opposition. He had depended upon her being too timid to avow her attachment ; and he had determined to avail himself of all the advantages that concealment would afford him.

“ You do *at last* then own a preference ?” said the earl, at length recollecting himself sufficiently to speak. “ So then, as you have not volunteered your affections, I am to understand that you have bestowed them in consequence of the arden sollicitations of your most disinterested and honourable lover ?”

“ I have never been the object of Lord Selborne's ardent sollicitations.”

“ No !” returned his lordship. “ Then I must confess that I have not done him justice ; and yet I thought him the *meanest* of mankind. I gave him credit for being a knave, but I find he is also a fool. What ! did he enter a gentleman's family

family with an insidious design of stealing his fortune, and yet neglect the means of procuring it?"

"I do not understand you, my lord."

"Are you ignorant that he endeavoured to marry my heiress without my permission? Is not that a knavish act? And you pretend to tell me that he has gained your heart without sollicitation. What mode of courtship then did this non-descript lover use? How came you, I say, to be won more easily than the *weakest* of your sex, who all require some little management, something like art and address, before they yield to their *perverse* inclinations?"

"Lord Selborne was ignorant that I was your heiress," said Sophia steadily. "For myself, I will own, I was pleased with his manner; and I respected in him those virtues which my grand-papa Brudenell had taught me to esteem."

"Ah!"

“ Ah !” returned the earl, grinning horribly a ghastly smile, “ the mighty secret then is discovered. This meek and humble pastor, this fainted philosopher, whose thoughts and views were all fixed on a better world, he who never thought that he had done his duty till he had resigned you to my care, proves to be a meddling politician, a cunning cautious hypocrite, a disposer of my property without my leave, a match-maker, one who encourages, nay who projects, the most infamous breach of generous unsuspecting hospitality, that ever disgraced the annals of ingratitude.”

Miss Glanville’s strong emotions would not permit her to keep silence any longer. “ If any thing,” said she, “ could urge me to forget my duty to *you*, it must be your lordship’s misapprehension of the most exalted virtue that humanity can exhibit. I owe my grandpapa Brudenell a debt that I never can repay him.”

“And me nothing?” returned the jealous earl.

“Yes, my lord! I owe you observance, gratitude, obedience, and all those acts of duty which Mr. Brudenell taught, and I will endeavour to practise; for I am conscious that I shall lose *his esteem* if I ever fail in the performance.”

“Brudenell,” said Lord Glanville, “like other great moralists, may affix his own interpretation to the virtues he preaches; but I expect you to attend to *my* definition of duty, or I shall not be satisfied with what you call performing it. Receive the addresses of a gentleman whose suit has my approbation. Begin immediately to wean your heart from a needy soldier of fortune; and study the virtues of a man who is one of the first characters of the age, for *merit* as well as *station*.”

Sophia curtesied and withdrew to her chamber, to indulge, as it may be well believed,

believed, in that soft tribute of regret which humanity cannot but pay, when compelled to drink of the bitter cup of affliction. But, though Miss Glanville had not so much Amazonian stoicism as to refrain from tears, she had enough of Christian equanimity soon to dry them. Her present situation called for firm resolutions and circumspect conduct ; and immoderate grief will not promote either of these desirable ends. Prayer is the natural language of distress ; and after an earnest petition for divine assistance, she set herself to consider what she ought to do. Should she send for Mr. Brudenell ? he promised to come to her at *any* emergency ; but beside that it was wrong to disturb his declining years, she recollected that his advanced age would not permit her to depend long on his friendly counsels. At seventy, life hangs by a slender thread ; and in all human probability the time must soon arrive

arrive when she must think and act without him. Beside, she had incautiously exposed him to Lord Glanville's resentment, by confessing that he approved of Lord Selborne; and therefore, instead of hoping for any good effects from his mediation, she should only expose him to the insults, or, what is still worse, the *smothered* malevolence, of dark hypocrisy.

Perceiving that it would be unwise to call in the aid of this *best* ally, she now set herself to review the past, and thence to draw inferences for the future. For one wise reason, namely, that she could only remedy her own faults, she chiefly confined her attention to the retrospection of her own conduct; and endeavoured to discover wherein she had been to blame, instead of arraigning her grandfather's treachery and cruelty. Perceiving nothing that deserved *material* censure, her heart became lightened of
half

half its woes. She looked up to heaven with a firmer confidence of support; and, though the state of her own affections left her no reason to suppose that Montolieu would ever occupy Selborne's place in her heart, or indeed that the latter would ever yield his sovereign pre-eminence to *any* rival, she thought it would be just to pay that attention to the marquis's behaviour which would enable her to give a better reason for her rejection than was given to Dr. Fell:

“ I do not like thee, Dr. Fell;

“ The reason why I cannot tell.”

Feeling herself as firmly determined to abide by her own choice, as any heroine with torn hair, clenched hands, and swollen eyes can be, Sophia met her grandfather the next morning, resolved to compromise for her resistance in this essential point, by more ready acquiescence, if possible, in every other; and

and determined to try if she could not make herself so necessary to him, as to induce him to wish to keep her as his companion, and then to interest his self-love in her favour, and to arm it against his ambition.

Lord Glanville, in expectation of meeting with all the distresses of romantic love, had taken care to provide that species of artillery which inexorable parents generally oppose to *very tender* woe. He had bent his brows, lengthened his strides, clenched his fist, and studied a number of biting sarcasms, which he thought might have some chance of gaining a victory over tears, sighs, fullness, and soft complaints, even when marching up under that very *banner of misery*, a white cambric pocket handkerchief. But when, instead of being thus encountered, Sophia met him with a smile, inquired after his health, drew him a chair, presented his chocolate, and joined in easy chat

chat as if nothing had happened, the forces of ill-nature which he had summoned to his aid, were suddenly put to the rout ; and, instead of resolving to part with his torment as soon as possible, he began to wonder whether he could *live* without his comforter.—— *Memorandum* : I advise all young ladies who are in love to read the above paragraph every morning.

The family party was broken in upon by an early visit from Lady Susan Wilson. The chaste humour and playful good sense of that lady were so congenial to Sophia's taste, that she always felt delighted in her company ; and, notwithstanding a great disparity of years, Lady Susan felt most tenderly attached to her young friend, and desirous of lessening the difficulties by which she saw her surrounded. Her company was never more welcome to Sophia than this morning, especially as Lord Montolieu
soon

soon made his appearance. Only general conversation could take place while Lady Susan stayed, and Miss Glanville's eyes asked that favour in too intelligent language to be refused. Among the talk of the day, the approaching masquerade was discussed, which was declared to be expected to be equally magnificent with any that had preceded it, and more *select*, as regulations had been adopted to exclude improper company. Montolieu heard with astonishment, that, though it was fixed for the following evening, Miss Glanville had not got a ticket; he requested her to accept one; but, without waiting for the earl's opinion, Sophia avowed her dislike of such a confused scene, and expressed sentiments of apprehension which she knew not how to define. The intreaties of the marquis gained no ground, and the gentlemen soon after withdrew.

Sophia's

Sophia's eyes followed them to the door. "What are they going to discuss?" was the first suggestion. But Lady Susan's vivacity soon diverted her from pursuing this train of thought.

"Then you are most steadfastly determined against this masquerade?" inquired Lady Susan.

"As much so," replied Miss Glanville, "as a person who has no will of her own can be."

"I begin to think," resumed the other, "that you will never make a good marchioness."

"Most assuredly I never shall."

"I once hoped," continued Lady Susan, "that you would have cut a conspicuous figure in a side-box at the opera, surrounded by pretty fellows; looking at your lord's mistress, and admiring his taste in the arrangement of her diamonds. I now begin to fear that you would look miserable on such an occasion, and then
every

every body who is not as old and as forlorn as myself would be ashamed of your acquaintance."

Sophia laughed at this fallacy of friendly raillery, and, thanking Lady Susan for the kind hint it contained, added, that she never had any predilection for that conspicuous rank which she was *now* voted unworthy of possessing.

Lady Susan then inquired whether she had seen Lady Caroline Raymond since her arrival in London; and, finding that they had not met by accident, and that Lord Glanville would not permit them to do so by appointment, her ladyship with a very significant look observed, "I am not sure that she would not have made an admirable marchioness."

"I must," replied Miss Glanville, "reprove you for choosing a husband for a person whom I tenderly love, which husband you have just declared unworthy of me."

"Tastes

“Tastes differ, my dear Miss Glanville. Lady Caroline might have had a more *lively* sense of Lord Montolieu’s perfections than yourself, or have been less hurt at his failings. I really do wish, and not *wholly* for *your* sake, that Lady Caroline was now the wife of the marquis.”

The rest of the conversation not being important to my narrative, I shall not repeat it; and I shall slightly pass over a scene in which Lord Montolieu, with many apologies for his former negligence, which he ascribed to extreme respect, apprehension, and every motive but the true one, urged his pretensions to Sophia’s hand; and in which Sophia, with equal delicacy, frankness, and politeness, declined his offer. The marquis continued to urge his hopes that his unwearied assiduity, his most tender and devoted regard, would in time so far preponderate against the preference which

he understood was the cause of his rejection, as to crown his constancy with ultimate success. Sophia, a little piqued at finding her bosom-secret likely to become town-talk, without deigning to reply to what she thought an impertinent suggestion, assured the marquis, that her sentiments on this subject *never* would change; but that, if he suspected her of a prior engagement, there would be an impropriety in his persevering in his suit, which a gentleman of his honour and delicacy must strongly feel. Montolieu answered, that he was too much attached, to listen to such cold counsellors. He persisted in his intreaties, and Sophia in her refusals. He at length implored her not to forbid his visits; and she replied, that she should be very happy to see him as Lord Glanville's friend. The entrance of the earl put an end to the conversation, and allowed her to withdraw.

Too

Too proud to confess a disappointment which he strongly felt, the marquis answered to Lord Glanville's inquiries, as to the progress that he had made in his mistress's heart, that his success was as great as he presumed to hope. It was then mutually agreed, that she should not be pressed upon the subject, as contradiction would be the most likely means to confirm opposition. Sophia was, therefore, permitted to enjoy that deceitful calm which usually precedes a hurricane; and the nuptial preparations were somewhat suspended, owing, as it was stated, to legal difficulties in properly drawing-up the settlements.

CHAP. XXIV.

A Masquerade Adventure. A Hue and Cry for a blue Domino.

THE next morning Lady Susan again called on Miss Glanville. The earl was in a most admirable humour; and when the masquerade was discussed, he regretted that his health would not permit him to join the sprightly circle, and partake of an amusement which he much enjoyed. After his usual declamation on his constant wish to promote the happiness that he could not share, he advised Sophia to change her mind, and accept of Lady Susan's invitation to join *her* party. Miss Glanville, who dreaded nothing more than a long evening with her grandfather, was easily prevailed upon

upon to use the ticket which Lady Susan's niece had been obliged to decline from having a violent cold, and to make a third in the very sober set of Sir Ralph and his lady. The latter readily promised to return home early ; observing, that the clamour soon wearied those who had no other motive to frequent a masquerade than curiosity. The business of dress was soon arranged, as Sophia had not the least wish to be a conspicuous figure ; and, what is perhaps a most singular circumstance, the party reached the scene of action without either accident or alarm.

Masquerades have been too often described by excellent painters of living manners, for me to hope to give either interest or novelty to a narrative of the wonders that occurred at this. Miss Glanville admired the splendor of some masks and the wit of others, and for some time felt highly amused by

the novelty of the exhibition. But, as even the *vivacity* of nuns, the *activity* of Dutchmen, the *sentimental* elegance of footmen, the *eloquence* of harlequins, and the *politeness* of Turks, will tire, she became anxious to withdraw. Lady Susan felt equally incommoded by the heat and the crowd, and the ladies agreed to wait in one of the more retired apartments while Sir Ralph ordered the carriage.

The lights in this room were nearly extinguished ; but in one of the recesses stood a fair Circassian and a blue domino, deeply engaged in very interesting conversation. To the intreaties of the latter, that he might be honoured with her confidence that evening, the former answered, “ I have told you that it is impossible.” “ Ah !” said the swain, “ I see that I am not yet deemed deserving of your pity.” The lady replied, “ perhaps that conclusion is just.”

Early

Early in the evening Miss Glanville had distinguished the graceful step, elegant form, and dignified deportment of this Circassian, from the less conspicuous figures by whom she was surrounded ; but as she talked in a feigned voice, and never once removed her mask, Sophia could only guess at her identity. She now spoke in her natural tone, and its sprightly sweetness was too intelligible. “ Ah,” said Miss Glanville, trembling while she grasped Lady Susan’s arm, “ is not she Lady Caroline Raymond ?”

“ As certainly as he is Lord Montolieu,” returned Lady Susan. “ Hush ! we shall hear more.”

“ We are overheard,” said the Circassian to the blue domino, as she advanced toward the door. Sophia had by this time pulled off her mask ; and, throwing her arms around the lady as she attempted to pass, exclaimed “ Oh, my Caroline !”

“ My dearest Sophia !” returned the other with equal tenderness, “ are you still my friend ?”

“ Ever your friend, your most faithful friend,” resumed Miss Glanville.

Overpowered by the emotions which assailed her heart, she seemed fainting in Lady Caroline’s arms, who, assisted by her chaperon, placed her upon a sofa.

“ This is no place for eclairsissements,” said Lady Caroline, “ and we two have many things to talk over. Dare you meet me to-morrow morning ?”—“ I *dare* do many things at *your* request,” returned Sophia.

Lady Susan then proposed her house as the scene of the interview, which was gratefully acceded to by both parties. “ But, heavens !” said Lady Caroline, assuming one of her gayest airs, “ I have lost my cecisbeo, and I believe most of my party are gone. I shall never get to my carriage : I must have him cried.

O yes !

O yes! O yes! has any body seen a blue domino?"

"I did" said Miss Glanville, with as much significance as her timidity would permit her to assume. "He *slipped* by us when I accosted you."

"Did he so," replied Lady Caroline with some hesitation. Then, Sophy, take warning from your *matronly* friend; and never pin your faith on the sleeve of a blue domino."

"*I will not,*" returned Miss Glanville with great energy. Lady Susan now offered Sir Ralph's assistance to conduct Lady Caroline to her own carriage; or, if it were more eligible, a place in theirs.

Lady Caroline preferred the latter, as it would afford her more of her dear Sophia's society. Struggling with the sense of conscious imprudence, she endeavoured to cover her chagrin by assuming superior vivacity. She insisted, not only that they should first set her

down, but that they should not drive from her door, till they heard the locks shoot and the bolts clench for the night, “that you may witness,” said she, “that all is safe, and that I keep regular hours.”

Sleep and Miss Glanville were for that night strangers ; for, though the rectitude of her own conduct furnished those peaceful reflections which generally call tranquil slumbers to the pillow of innocence, she could not recollect the conversation which she had witnessed between Lady Caroline and the blue domino, without the liveliest emotions of terror and censure. Her conviction that the latter was the marquis of Montolieu increased her alarm ; for, though she had not hitherto entertained any high opinion of his character, she did not believe him so sunk in depravity as to attempt the seduction of a married woman ; at the very instant too when he was
urging

urging an honourable suit with her near relation. She in vain endeavoured to consider their tête-a-tête as accidental, or to reconcile what she had heard with any rules of propriety that virtue would acknowledge to be valid. Lady Susan Wilson's hints rushed upon her mind; but, to parry these, she opposed the transport with which Lady Caroline had welcomed her, and the carelessness with which she alluded to her conversation with the blue domino. If her presence had interrupted an illicit amour, or if Lady Caroline felt conscious of a criminal intention, why that hearty embrace? why that easy badinage? Yet again, if there were nothing wrong, why did the blue domino desert his charge the moment she was joined by respectable friends? Perhaps Lady Caroline would explain the mystery; that hope increased Sophia's anxiety for the promised interview; and she thought it adviseable

not to tell Lord Glanville that she had seen his daughter till it was over, lest he should interdict a meeting that promised such important issues.

Lady Caroline was punctual to her hour, and Sophia viewed with the deepest regret the change that a few months had made in her countenance. The delicate smoothness and brilliancy of her complexion had disappeared; and, though rouge was resorted to as a substitute for natural roses, it wanted the kindling animation, the ever-varying expression, which used alternately to flush and fade in her most intelligent face. Every feature too seemed worn with anxiety; her eyes had lost their lustre, and appeared sunk and dim, compared with the lightning glances which darted from them at Glanville castle, when, seated at the head of her father's table, dispensing polished wit round an admiring circle, delighting and delighted, she

she disarmed gravity, and forced severe reason "to smile as she finished her reproof."

Miss Glanville commenced the conversation with asking after Mr. Raymond. "Well in health," was Lady Caroline's moody answer. She stopped one moment, as if contending with her own passions; and then told Sophia, that, knowing she never had been one of Raymond's *warm* admirers, she would excuse her from those ceremonious inquiries which fashion had rendered customary.

"You must," returned Sophia, "forget the opinion I formed of a person who was *then* indifferent to me, but who is now the husband of my dearest friend."

"But when I have taken up your indifference, Sophy, you must not, out of contradiction, affect my *discarded* esteem." Lady Caroline rested her
head

head on her hand one moment, and then exclaimed, " 'Tis in vain to attempt disguise with you : I am wretched ! "

There is a species of distress, which often prompts young ladies to inform each other that they are the most pitiable and miserable beings in the world. Not that they are at that time groaning on the bed of pain, languishing in sickness, mourning in captivity, pining through poverty, or enduring various other calamities which occur to some people's minds whenever the grand climax of wretchedness is mentioned : no such thing is thought of : most *very young* ladies, especially such as are adepts in the sciences that are taught by me and my sister novelists, know, that there are more heart-rending troubles than any of the above. Papa may forbid Jacky Spruce the house, or Jacky may walk by the window with Fanny Flirt hanging on his arm ; or Bob Dapper
may

may be more agreeable than Jacky, and yet Jacky may refuse to return the capricious angel the picture, purse, smelling bottle, and lock of hair, which she gave him as proofs of *everlasting* love; nay, Mr. Spruce may even grow valiant, and threaten to call Mr. Dapper out, for ungentlemanlike behaviour. Now, as Bayes says, "There is a distress for you!" I can compare it to nothing but shadows in a moonlight night, or embattled armies in the Aurora Borealis.

Matrimonial wretchedness presents a grief of another kind; and being rather more substantial, though perhaps not so variable and terrific as the former, we can only parry it by having recourse to the wise old maxim, that "what cannot be cured must be endured." Now, though it is very amusing to agitate the pacific sea of early youth by a few *fictitious* tempests, which may be succeeded
by

by seasons of sunshine, it must be remembered that the nuptial tie is indissoluble; and, since the most courageous spirit can hardly venture to encounter a life of *real* misery, I would humbly recommend to all those of my own sex who have been so unfortunate as to choose precipitately, to regulate their conduct by another of those homely rules which have (after all) some *good sense* in them, and try to “make the best of a bad bargain.” We may not, perhaps, be able to convert the pebble into a diamond; but what if, by indefatigable labour, it should be polished into a Bristol stone, will not our ingenuity be rewarded by the change? A jealous husband, whom levity might drive into an Othello, might by prudence be softened into the proper delicacy of a Julius Cæsar, and only desire that his wife should be without suspicion, as well as without guilt. If the good man be moody, by
“giving

“ giving him line and rope his passions may, like a whale on ground, confound themselves with working.” There is no *venial* error which may not be corrected by the gentle influence of a prudent companion, who steadily sets herself to counteract its vehemence. As to *assumed* defects, I do not pity the woman who marries a coxcomb, because in that case she was not the victim of art and disguise; but she must either have a mercenary mind, or that sort of perverted taste which admires distortions. The *vices* of our wedded partner, especially if fixed and habitual, are the most severe species of trial to which a well regulated mind can be exposed; and there is no other defence against them, than the superior purity of our conduct, the regular influence of our good example, our intercessory prayers, and the comforts of religion. These, I trust, are sufficient not merely to preserve us from despair,
but

but to gild our lives with the cheerful ray of conscious duty.

Lady Caroline Raymond had too much supreme contempt for the passive virtues, to take her nuptial disappointment meekly. She complained, that she was deceived where she placed implicit trust, neglected where she looked for gratitude, despised where she had conferred obligation, cheated out of herself by a most iniquitous plot, and by that means made ridiculous by the very action which would otherwise have been highly heroical. In fine, she found herself, instead of being looked up to as “the glass wherein the youth of her sex should dress themselves,” treated by many ladies of rank and character with a degree of reserve and pity bordering upon contempt. She entirely forgot that she never had any reason to place implicit trust in Mr. Raymond; that, when she chiefly looked to the gratification

tion of her own thirst for vengeance, she could not be said to confer obligation; that it was absurd to seek for gratitude in a soil where it could not grow; and that, as to the trick by which she had been cheated into an elopement, it had been so clumsily performed as to deceive no creature but herself. But, as those who wilfully rush to meet ruin are generally less patient than those whom ruin overtakes, Lady Caroline's sense of her affliction was most poignant. Too proud to tell the world that she felt the effects of her folly, the corrosive dart stuck deeper in her heart. In broken interrupted sentences she at last disclosed her misery to the only person whom she loved; and while her cheeks glowed with shame, and her eyes flashed indignation, she concluded with saying, that the remainder of her life was doomed to despair.

“ I trust

“ I trust not,” said Sophia with sympathizing sweetness. “ Mr. Raymond has been very wrong; but he *may* see his errors. His behaviour to you may change. I am sure that you will always be ready to forgive.”

“ Never,” said Lady Caroline. “ The man who has betrayed me shall never again possess my confidence. Oh, Sophia! what a wife would I have made, had I but found a worthy partner! Generous and liberal, even to self-disregard; affectionate and frank to the degree of boundless tenderness and unreserved participation; patient under every misfortune, if shared with him I loved. But observe, Sophia, not a word on this subject. It is *only* to you that I will even this *once* complain of a cancer that is now consuming my vitals.”

“ I promise you inviolable secrecy,” returned Miss Glanville, her eyes overflowing with tears. “ But, my dearest friend,

friend, though you deserved a far happier lot, yet since heaven thinks fit to try you ——”

“ I know what you are going to urge :” ‘ Submit and endure ;’ “ such is your creed ; mine is different. You will talk of *deserved* corrections ; I of injustice and injuries. You will tell me, that I have been to blame, that I have provoked my fate, you may even repeat your warnings ; but hear my reply, and then we will quit this subject : I erred through the impulse of exuberant generosity. I was betrayed through want of suspicion. I thought all other hearts pure as my own, and still think it was glorious so to act. A narrow-minded world cannot judge of me ; and as to the correcting Power to whom you would bid me look, I know not the laws by which he governs us sublunary creatures ; but I know that I am as he has fashioned me ; and I know
that,

that, while I act as my feelings prompt me, he cannot condemn his own works."

Sophia could have asked Lady Caroline, why she was so incensed with Raymond, since, according to her own system, he was only indulging the propensities of his nature, and must of course be acting morally right. But, conscious that her present humour was not adapted for such discussions, she strove to lead her to think of a reconciliation with Lord Glanville; and concluded her mild intreaties on this subject with a hint, that even if the application were unsuccessful, she would derive real satisfaction from knowing that the effort had been made.

"No, Sophy," was Lady Caroline's reply. "I will not be the first to sue for pardon. I know that I was wrong in encouraging a man who had no pretensions to my favour; but Lord Glan-

ville first injured me. He talked of his confidence and frankness, while he treated me with reserve and treachery; he boasted of my merits, while he proved by his conduct that he both hated and feared me. And shall I now bring my sorrows to his feet, and shew him that I am the wretch he *wishes* me to be? Shall I allow him to insult me with a declamation on his own virtues and my crimes, every tittle of which I know to be false? No; let me bear my present pangs, rather than apply the *burning caustic* of Lord Glanville's pity."

The conversation now turned on Sophia's prospects; and Lady Caroline slightly observed, that the world soon expected her to be marchioness of Montolieu.

"My own expectations," said Sophia, "are very different. Perhaps," continued she smiling, "you will now release
me

me from your interdiction against encouraging Lord Selborne's addresses."

"Lord Selborne," replied Lady Caroline, "is a man of sense and honour, and I (breathe it not to the winds!) a fool for despising his precautions. But what is your objection to Montolieu?"

"I have many."

"Name them. He is thought to be very elegant, liberal, graceful in his person, pleasant in conversation, and as correct in his morals as ——

"Any other dissipated man of fashion," interrupted Miss Glanville.

"Oh you are puritanically strict I know. But indeed, Sophia, seeing a little of the world will make you relax the tight rein which you put on at the old parsonage. On the continent, wives not only permit, but countenance and direct their husband's amours. I hear that they *now* visit in trio, madame

with her spouse and cecisbeo, or monsieur with his wife and chere amie."

Sophia did not laugh, and Lady Caroline proceeded.

"You know me too well to suppose that I would myself be criminal, even to gain the happiness which my soul desires; but when a woman ceases to love her husband, it is absurd in her to be piqued at his infidelities. If Raymond shewed me that observance which would convince me that he acknowledged me to be the superior character, I would always be civil to any decent woman whom he took under his protection. I would even be kind to his natural children. If I had none of my own, I would adopt them, and educate them myself ——"

"Indeed!" interrupted Sophia:
"What, in your own house? regardless of the bad effects which such an example might have upon your servants and the

world at large? without even considering how contrary such a public countenance of vice is to the spirit of our religion, and even to the tenor of our laws?"

"The conscious mind is its own awful world," repeated Lady Caroline. "While I felt that I was acting right, I should pay no attention to dry disquisitions, ill-digested obsolete dogmas, and musty records, seen through the dim and cloudy medium of our establishments. To this hoary lumber I would oppose the dictates of enlarged philanthropy; and surely, Sophia, you would not blame my conduct, when you saw me nursing, protecting, and instructing the interesting imbecility of infant weakness. Can you point out a more truly great and virtuous line of conduct?"

"If it lay in my power," said Sophia, "I would rescue the certainly guiltless babe from indigence, infamy, and

and guilt. I would also exert my endeavours to make it a useful member of society, in the rank of life which its mother filled in her days of innocence. I would go no farther; I should be as cautious of embracing my husband's *chere amie*, as of suffering the world to suspect I allowed any gentleman a greater share of my affections than the strictest modesty would permit. If manners on the continent be as corrupt as you describe, it *behooves British decorum to make the firmer stand*. We may be at peace with the *persons* of the wicked, but never with their *morals*."

"My morals retain their native purity," returned Lady Caroline. "My friends shall never have cause to blush at my shame, nor to condemn my guilt. But the heart can know no vacuum. If Raymond, the mean ungrateful Raymond, cease to occupy it, what if I fill it with another image?"

“ Oh ! for heaven’s sake,” said Miss Glanville, “ whither are you rushing ? into the very whirlpool of destruction ! Never think that your proud sense of honour will preserve you from the most infamous guilt, should you be at once stimulated by your affection for a plausible insinuating seducer, and contempt for your husband. If you have no pity for yourself, if you could be willing to blast all your fair fame, to sink your frantic father to the grave, loading you with execrations ; if you could endure to be that despised avoided being whom you now only suppose yourself, yet for my sake, dearest Caroline, ——”

Miss Glanville here burst into tears, and flung her arms around her friend’s neck. “ Sweet girl !” exclaimed her ladyship, softened by this pathetic address, “ is there one human being who really loves me ? and have I grieved that precious friend ? Oh Sophy ! I shall

shall now believe you never will forsake me."

"Never," replied Sophia; "yet do not put my love to so severe a test. Do not make me blush to say how dear you are to my heart."

"Yet," said Lady Caroline, "I am even now going to put your love to that test, by owning the name of the man with whose image my whole heart is filled. It is Mr. Brudenell."

"Love him on," returned Miss Glanville; "why did you terrify me, Caroline? I thought of that odious blue domino."

Lady Caroline started. "The blue domino, my dear! I don't understand you—when—where? Pray did you know the blue domino?"

"I am not quite sure," answered Sophia. "Did you?"

"I am not positive. There are a great many young men about town just

alike. There are Harry Beauchamp, and Colonel Knowles, and Lord Montolieu, for instance; so alike, that when they are masked I never know which I am talking to."

"But will you suffer me to ask, what favour was he soliciting, which you said could not be granted that evening?"

"Oh! a tête-à-tête game at piquet."

"A tête-à-tête game at piquet!" reiterated Miss Glanville. "What an abominably audacious request, and addressed to a lady of character too."

Lady Caroline fell a laughing. "And what diverting naïveté!" returned she. "Why 'tis the universal jest at masquerades. No creature but a novice would notice it. Indeed, Sophia, I never can invite you to my morning parties; the gallantry of the pretty fellows by whom I am surrounded would make you die with confusion."

"Have

“ Have you *many* pretty fellows who constantly attend you ?” asked Sophia.

“ An army,” replied Lady Caroline.

“ And never a commander in chief ?”

“ Only Generalissimo Brudenell.— Now, Sophy, what will you say of me ?”

“ That I hope you are only careless,” returned Miss Glanville. “ May I never say worse !”

“ Come, be candid,” returned the other, “ nor measure every character by the sterling excellence of your own. I am not bad ; good I might have been had my habits been early inured to the practice of the gentle virtues. Had I been your sister, educated with you in that peaceful rectory, which you have so often described, perhaps I might have been happy : but it is all over now.”

“ No,” said Miss Glanville with great energy ; “ habits may be changed at any

period of life; opinions may be taught to flow in a different channel. We cannot alter the past, but the future is all our own."

"What!" replied Lady Caroline, "when, like the victims of Mezentius's cruelty, we have a dead body bound to us by an indissoluble chain? For whom should I reform? Or can I, when tortured by irremediable sorrows, coolly sit down to try plans of reformation, or attempt to transform myself into a being of a superior order, when I know that I am already too good for my nearest connexions?"

"If we look more to the *end* of our existence, than to the evils which at present impede our course," said Sophia, "we may do this; and, to use a favourite term of your own, fulfil the high destinies for which we are formed. But, Caroline, lovers generally pour out their *whole* hearts to each other; and I shall

shall suspect that you are not so constant and unreserved to Generalissimo Brudenell as you ought to be, unless you tell *him* your sorrows, and submit to be guided by his counsels."

Lady Caroline asked her friend, if she thought he would answer her. Miss Glanville engaged that he would. "And do you also think," said her ladyship, "that I should act as he advised me? Ah, Sophy! you shake your head. It is, indeed, so doubtful a point, that I will neither tax his politeness nor my own ingenuoufness. When I feel that I can deserve his assistance, I will ask him to bestow it; and in the mean time let me own, that he and you are my only preservations against general misanthropy."

Sophia would have rejected a compliment that was paid to her at the expence of human nature; but Lady Caroline rose to avoid what she called the Herculean labour of instructing people in a

science which they were resolved not to learn. "You believe yourself only like other people," said she. "I will lay no traps for your integrity. Tell Lord Glanville that you have seen me, and speak of me as your judgment shall best dictate. If his heart should really soften, I would kneel and ask his blessing. His blessing, did I say? no; there is no blessing in store for me, unless, dear and only depository of my affections and sorrows, it is your *sympathizing friendship*."

Lady Caroline rushed out of the room as she spoke these words; and Miss Glanville remained for some time overcome by the contrary feelings of tenderness, affection, displeasure, and regret.

CHAP. XXV.

A Glimpse of the blue Domino, who seems more like a Devil. The Woman who deliberates is lost.

MISS GLANVILLE took the earliest opportunity of the earl's being in good humour, to inform him that she had seen Lady Caroline; and a polite inquiry after the health of that lady encouraged the fair mediatrix to say, that she perceived the penitent was truly desirous to throw herself at her father's feet, if she could be certain that such humiliation would be accepted.—“She is infinitely too humble,” returned the sarcastic father. “I am not so presumptuous as to make any claims on Mrs. Raymond's *duty*, nor have I any *right* to grant her forgiveness. No tie subsists between us; we are

independent beings, free as air to act as each thinks best. But, though I disclaim all thoughts of abridging her natural liberty, yet, as I find she is a woman in high life, I am desirous to be upon the *best* terms with her. Be sure, therefore, to make my most respectful considerations acceptable to her next time you see her. Say, that I rejoice to hear she is happy, and that I esteem myself flattered by *any* testimony of her regard."

Miss Glanville felt embarrassed at this answer. She knew that it was very common for Lord Glanville to have recourse to this species of Jesuitical craft, whenever he wished to remove to the shoulders of another the load of difficulties which oppressed himself. It was his usual method to hang out such dubious signals as would permit him to say his friends had mistaken his meaning, and thus dexterously slip the blame

of every mishap upon his blundering assistants. It was impossible for Sophia to know how her grandfather wished her to act. If she forbore all intercourse with Lady Caroline, and the world blamed the earl for being too implacable to his repentant child, it would be very easy to say, that he not only permitted his grand-daughter to see her, but had actually made her the bearer of a very kind message, which (he would not say from what motive) he discovered had never been delivered. If, on the contrary, Lady Caroline's subsequent behaviour should be such as to justify her father for casting her entirely off, Lord Glanville would immediately protest that he foresaw her final unworthiness, and reprobate Sophia's obstinacy and folly for affording the criminal any pretensions to say that her first misconduct had been forgiven.

I have

I have already recommended a thorough acquaintance with Christian principles, as the means of having an unerring guide always at hand, ready to remove every difficulty, and to elucidate every perplexity. Miss Glanville was not obliged to turn over volumes to know how she ought to act. She rejoiced that the earl had given her no positive injunction; and, in following the dictates of her own judgment, she rather consulted Lady Caroline's situation than her own. She perceived with pleasure, that she possessed a considerable influence over her, and interpreted her parting confession, that she was willing to receive her father's blessing, as a proof that the ties of nature and the call of positive duties had more weight in her judgment than her haughty spirit was willing to allow. "I will improve that influence," said Sophia. "Affliction softens every character. Caroline can-

not long support this strain of fullen greatness and affected levity. She is one of those miserable beings whom my grandpapa describes; dissatisfied with herself, and trying to deceive others. But she is no practised adept in dissimulation; and I shall soon lead her back to her native sincerity. If she will but allow me to direct her to the best source of comfort, I may materially brighten the gloom of her temporal prospects, and disclose to her view the unclouded regions of futurity. And if, while I thus act, I should encounter a little caprice, ill-nature, or injustice, cannot I bear a mortal's frown while I know that it has not been deserved by improper conduct?"

Though Miss Glanville felt almost confident that Lady Caroline's share of blame at the masquerade adventure ought to be placed to the account of levity, rather than of actual guilt, yet she was
not

not so satisfied about the purity of the blue domino's intentions; nor was it mere female curiosity which induced her to sift Lord Montolieu on the subject. She fancied that he seemed uneasy when she mentioned the masquerade; and, though he positively denied being there, she had the address to discover that he not only knew more about it than he could well have discovered by report, but that he could not give a satisfactory account how he had disposed of himself for the evening. Being pretty much pressed by her inquiries, he at last owned that he was there, and laughed off his former denials as a jest, regularly practised on such occasions to mislead acquaintance. But, without waiting for any mention of a blue domino, he told Miss Glanville that he wore a friar's dress, and lolled in a corner the whole evening.

Though

Though this was certainly as Joseph Surface would have said, "a clear account of the matter," Sophia's suspicions were not removed; and, as she met Colonel Knowles and Harry Beauchamp that evening at a rout, those suspicions were so far extended, as to join Lady Caroline in the charge of duplicity; for, although those gentlemen were just of Lord Montolieu's height, no person who had a perfect use of their senses could confuse their identity. Harry Beauchamp's voice, or rather squeak, was the very opposite of the marquis's, which realized Dryden's idea of "a trumpet with a silver sound." The colonel's achievements in the field of honour had been purchased at the expence of personal elegance, and the limp in his gait was rather a contrast than a similitude to the airy movements or easy lounge of the graceful peer. Neither of these gentlemen could be the blue domino.

Determined

Determined to charge Lady Caroline with evasion, she called at her house next morning at a very early hour, that their conversation might not be interrupted by the intrusion of other visitants. Of course the servants informed her that their lady was not at home; but Sophia, stating that their intimacy precluded form, sent in her name, and, certain of admittance, followed the footman too swiftly to permit him to announce her before she was in the dressing-room. Lady Caroline was at breakfast, tête-a-tête, *not* with her husband, but *with* Lord Montolieu.

It generally happens at these kinds of awkward rencontres, that the person who has least cause to be distressed feels most alarmed. Sophia trembled, and, being ready to faint, caught hold of the chair which his lordship presented her with the best grace imaginable; and, after an inquiry about Lord Glanville's health,

health, returned to his boiled eggs with an amazing appetite, requesting Lady Caroline to have mercy upon his nerves, and give him his next cup of tea two fifths water, and one fifth cream. Lady Caroline could not blush, for reasons with which most ladies of fashion are perfectly acquainted; but she could be in ecstasies with Sophia's goodness in refusing to be denied; she could rally Montolieu on his methodical frivolity; and could declare, that nothing but her friend's company was wanting to complete the agreeableness of the morning party.

Nobody was at a loss for conversation except Miss Glanville, who, finding the ideas with which she entered quite put to the rout, stumbled, as people generally do in such a case, upon awkward topics. Among the rest, she asked, where was Mr. Raymond? a question which almost convulsed Lady Caroline with laughter.

laughter. "Oh Montolieu," said she, "in this barbarous way she always uses me. There is no forgetting this odious incumbrance" (twirling her wedding ring) "one moment in her company. I verily believe she thinks that, like the pretty halcyons Cëyx and Alcyone, husbands and wives are continually cooing at each other. Indeed, my dear Sophy, I cannot even guess where my turtle is ; and once for all, if you mean to visit *him*, you could not come to a more unlikely place to meet him than his own nest."

When a lady's spirits are depressed, flattery often proves a most exhilarating cordial. Lord Montolieu ; perceiving that Sophia's eyes were filled with tears, hit off a few neat compliments on that enchanting simplicity and propriety of mind which led her to expect gentlemen would most frequently be found where their happiness and treasure were deposited.

posited. He undertook to vindicate his friend Raymond (for the marquis *was* the friend of Lady *Caroline's husband*) from the guilt of voluntary absence, by explaining the unavoidable business which had called him out that morning, and would detain him for several hours. He proceeded to state the occurrences which had also led himself early to Bond-street, and the commission which Raymond *there* gave him to apprise Lady Caroline of these circumstances; and, as she generally kept late hours, he farther charged the marquis to eat his breakfast with her, and to take care that the morning passed pleasantly. Lady Caroline, thinking he had told a sufficient number of falsties, interrupted Montolieu, by observing, that Miss Glanville's taste for domestication could not fail to be a most delightful subject of his lordship's praise. "But," continued she, "as I do not believe

lieve that even you can have a higher sense of my Sophia's merits than myself, and as I am too good a wife to pry into Raymond's secrets, drop this subject, and resume your account of last night's debate. I want to know how many converts were brought over by your splendid oration."

Supposing that the generality of my readers are as little interested in Lord Montolieu's political renown as myself, I will only say, that the narrative of parliamentary affairs took up two hours; during which Miss Glanville, imitating *perhaps* the august assembly which the marquis was describing, wished every period to be the last. She felt unwilling to go away without coming to some eclaircissement with her friend; yet she perceived that the noble lord was determined to out-stay her. Vexed at his impertinence, she at length took leave; Montolieu did the same; and, while he
handed

handed her down stairs, expressed his wish to see Lord Glanville that morning. She had already acknowledged her intention of returning immediately home, and found it impossible to deny him a place in her carriage.

On their way the marquis lamented the severity of his fate, which compelled him to an increased degree of admiration, even while his hopes of success gained little ground. He had selected some very pretty expressions, such as were formerly used by respectful, ardent, sincere admirers to their mistresses, from the love letters which his grandfather addressed to the *first* marchioness of Montolieu in the year 1735; and, conceiving that nothing else would suit Miss Glanville's very odd notions, he learned them by rote, depending upon his confessed skill in the art of appropriation, and graceful delivery, to melt Sophia's icy heart by repeating them. But he
had

had proceeded no farther than “domestic bliss and tender regard,” before he found himself nonplused, by Sophia’s observing, that Lady Caroline Glanville was a most charming companion. Montolieu could have exclaimed with Lord Foppington, “Piqued by all that’s fretful!” but, though he thought that this newly-discovered sentiment of jealousy augured extremely well, he felt that he was verging on too insecure ground to proceed carelessly. By a little dexterity he tuned his grandfather’s lyre to the praises of Lady Caroline, and introduced only one delicate allusion to Miss Glanville’s judgment in selecting such an *admirable* friend. Miss Glanville had seen enough of the great world to give its votaries credit for their skill in disguising their pursuits, and concealing their real sentiments; she was not, therefore, disposed to think that she had yet unravelled the mystery. Nor, though the marquis

quis further stated his anxiety to have this charming woman restored to the bosom of her family, did she feel convinced that his intimacy with the Raymonds proceeded, as he stated, from his desire to effect a *general reconciliation*. In return for all his elaborate commendations of her friend and herself, she frankly replied, “ You have spoken in praise of domestic bliss, my lord ; I will hope that my dear Caroline has a prospect of enjoying it, as she is united to the man whom she indisputably preferred. At least, I am convinced that you must, with me, *reprobate* any attempt to interrupt it. I am certain that if Lord Glanville had been present, he would have been pleased at your attempt to check her wild raillery on the subject of Mr. Raymond’s absence ; for, though I know her so well that I can account for the apparent levity of her expressions, from understanding the real purity of her in-

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tentions, I perceived *you justly thought* that she had gone too far; and by your *delicate* reproof she was soon convinced of her impropriety."

"Admirable!" thought Montolieu. "This absolutely tops my hopes. She really believes that I visit the haughty but fascinating Caroline from motives of the purest friendship. Yet she is jealous notwithstanding, and shews her anxiety to prevent even this dear friend from supplanting her in the affections of a man whom she freezes with the most frigid coldness. How very good! How admirably prudent! Glorious instability of female virtue! Attractive uncertainty of female consistency! Love and wealth, ye are both mine; a rich wife with a plentiful share of credulity, and a most enchanting mistress with more pride than discretion."

When Augustus Cæsar was about to quit the stage of life, he waited till the
last

last scene before he claimed the plaudits of his auditory ; and I would advise every actor who takes a part in the very intricate drama of iniquity to wait and see how the last act goes off, before he felicitates himself on being a successful performer. This is only a hint *en passant*. To proceed.

Miss Glanville determined on another visit to Lady Caroline, and rose the next morning with that intention. While the carriage was preparing, she had recourse to the newspapers of that day. Foreign intelligence was now become very interesting to her, and she soon fixed her eyes on the following paragraphs :

“ We are informed by a most respectable correspondent, whose intelligence has never yet deceived us, that he has seen a private letter from the camp at —, dated March the 2d, stating, that serious apprehensions are entertained

for the success of the expedition. Major General Lord S——e persists in opposing the measures of the commander-in-chief, not only at the council table, but in the operations of the field ; where, in the last engagement, one battalion was nearly cut to pieces owing to his temerity. He was ordered under arrest when the last packet failed.”

“ Another account states, that the above noble officer, on finding his arrest resolved upon, immediately shot himself through the breast, and was given over by the surgeons. We will not pledge ourselves for the truth of this last report. All we can say is, that something very fatal has happened to his lordship. It is whispered that there is a degree of mental derangement in the family. The relations of this young nobleman are in the deepest distress.”

So also was Miss Glanville, while debating on the probability of these fatal tidings.

tidings. It intirely rested on the circumstance of her lover's supposed derangement; for, allowing him to be perfectly in his senses, she was well convinced that he never would lead his brave followers into *needless* danger, nor have recourse to the dreadful expedient of suicide. Anxious to investigate this matter unobserved, she hurried into the carriage, and while driving to Lady Caroline's thought on no other subject.

Lady Caroline was at home, and rejoiced to see Sophia. Though the latter had few traits of the languishing nymph in her character, the pale lily of terror had certainly displaced the rose of health when she entered the apartment. Lady Caroline was too well acquainted with smothered sorrow to mistake its peculiar characters. She drew from Miss Glanville a confession that she was uneasy, and she soon prevailed on her to disclose the cause.

After reading the foul-harrowing paragraphs twice with great attention, and observing the *title* of the paper, Lady Caroline inquired how it came to fall into Sophia's hands. "I recollect," said she, "the earl considered this as his favourite oracle, and never suffered it to stray out of his own apartment." Miss Glanville replied, that she supposed it was brought into the breakfast room by mistake, instead of being carried into the library; and added, that though his lordship saw it, he did not take it with him when he retired. "Ah, dear incautious friend!" resumed Lady Caroline, "you shall not be the victim of arts by which I have been undone. The earl never departs from regular habits, but from some secret motive. Montolieu has asked me if I had seen the papers this morning; and hinted, that there are extraordinary rumours about town. My life upon the truth of what I affirm; not only is this
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a *fabrication*, but I have named the *fabricators*."

The same idea had presented itself to Miss Glanville's mind; but one undesigned acknowledgement of Lady Caroline's directed her terrors into a new channel. "What!" she exclaimed, "have you seen Lord Montolieu *again* this morning?"

"I have," said Lady Caroline; "I will have no reserves from you. He visits me most mornings."

"Say rather, Mr. Raymond," returned Miss Glanville.

"No, I am his object. Sophia, I am well assured that you never *wish* to be his wife. I know that Selborne is more suited to return that calm, chastised affection which I can see fills your whole heart. Would it not be a sort of Roman friendship, if I were to free you from your persecutor by taking him myself."

“ Good heavens, Lady Caroline Raymond ! you are talking of impossibilities. Do you forget that you are already a wife ? ”

“ No, no ; I *cannot* forget. — But marriages may be dissolved. ”

“ Only by the most horrible guilt, ” returned the terrified Sophia.

“ I grant, ” said Lady Caroline, “ that in some, nay in *most* cases, it is guilt ; but consider my peculiar situation. Duped into an elopement, cheated into a marriage, a base advantage taken of my ignorance of English manners ; can I call that a legal union which was accomplished by fraudulent means ? Must I for life remain bound to a man whom I despise, because in one rash moment I believed him incapable of deceiving me ? ”

“ In that fatal moment, ” returned Sophia, “ you gave your future fortunes a colour that cannot be changed, but by an
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an avowed contempt of all divine and human laws. And let me intreat you to reflect how far your own principles might impel you. You say that you chose Raymond in one rash moment : So, when the veil shall be torn away which *now* conceals the faults of an artful seducer, you will assert that you were equally blind when you chose Montolieu."

To this suggestion Lady Caroline had nothing to oppose but a loud laugh. "You are certainly," said she, "the most nervous creature that I know. I have never told you that I was going to choose Montolieu : I only say, that the end will sanctify the means, and that circumstances diminish faults. I now find that the marquis was the person whom Lord Glanville intended for my husband ; and had he pursued that design by *direct* means, or had I been less precipitate, I might have been happy.

In him I should have found a partner suited to my birth and fortune; I will also add, tastes and inclinations. Supposing the ardour of our first attachment had declined, the world would never have arraigned the folly of my choice; nor should I have been reduced to the poor hypocrisy of concealing my misery, lest it should be increased by ridicule."

"But you have chosen," observed Miss Glanville. "The bourn is past. Do not torment yourself with those vain regrets which may lead to the most fatal errors."

"*Errors*, certainly," replied Lady Caroline; "but not always *fatal*. Many women, who were wretched in their first choice, have had that tie legally dissolved, and lived admired patterns of conjugal fidelity with the man for whom they braved censure by avowing the preference arising from calm consideration.

ation. Many circumstances may palliate the infidelity of a wife; as the superior merit of the lover, an assurance that his affection will not be diminished by his receiving proofs of entire confidence, his solemn contract to place the fair one, who only *to him* is frail, in a more elevated rank than that she forfeited for his sake, and a determination to lead a most exemplary life afterwards. All these reasons, I say, especially if the first marriage were contracted under the influence of deception or constraint, or if the husband were very unworthy, such a one as every body must despise; surely these considerations, must diminish the offence."

"No," returned Miss Glanville, trembling with terror; "for your husband cannot be more unworthy than the *tempter* who betrays you to guilt and shame. Good heavens! that I should live to hear Caroline Glanville an apolo-

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gift for adultery! and with a man too, who she knows addresses another woman as an *honourable* lover. Where is her proud sense of honour? where her abhorrence of shame?"

There is a power in words, which nothing but the most hardened iniquity can withstand. Lady Caroline, who had almost reconciled her mind to a shameful deed when disguised in a decent periphrasis, started at the broad term adultery.—“I am no apologist for adultery,” said she with great warmth, “nor am I attached to Montolieu.”

“I constantly find him here,” answered Miss Glanville, “and you confess that he is *your* visitor.”

“Well! is there any crime in his visiting me?”

“No absolute crime, but marked impropriety. You are known to live unhappily with your husband: He is a man noted for intrigue, and you”——

“Go on.”

“Not noted for discretion.”

Lady Caroline’s indignant heart swelled at this accusation; but this short impulse of her natural temper was soon succeeded by the bitter feelings of remorse. “I have *deserved* your reproofs,” said she; “*once*, indeed I could have repented them; but ’tis all past. Call me indiscreet, Sophia; ’tis true I am so, but not guilty.”

“Then,” exclaimed Miss Glanville, embracing her with transport, “bar your doors against Lord Montolieu this instant.”

“And sit in this room,” said Lady Caroline, “a solitary mope, contriving sofas and curtains, or inspecting my housekeeper’s accounts, while Raymond squanders my fortune at every gaming-house in town. Ought I to exclude my creditor? I owe Montolieu money. You start, Sophia. Yes, the base mercenary
tyrant

tyrant whose name I bear reduces me to the necessity of applying to another man to defray my common expences."

"How much do you owe him?" said Miss Glanville. "Oh, permit me to be your banker. The earl has been so profusely liberal to me; and really I have found little call for money since I have been in London. You will wonder when I say that I can supply you with some hundreds; take them with all my heart."

"Hundreds," said Lady Caroline, "will not do."

"Nay," replied Miss Glanville, "now you do talk at random! How can you have spent more in so short a period?"

"I lost five hundred last night."

"Lost! How?"

"Don't turn informer! At pharo."

"Oh, my undone friend!" said Sophia, bursting into tears. "How could you, dear Caroline, so far forget the
modest

modest graces of your sex, as to join a rabble rout?"

"Scandalous girl!" returned Lady Caroline smiling, "no rabble rout, but the *very first* people in the kingdom, believe me."

"I will not believe you," said Miss Glanville; "for they forfeited their right to the honours of their country, when they broke its laws. What could induce you to join this desperate horde of plunderers?"

"Despair, and a wish for plunder," replied Lady Caroline, in her turn bursting into tears. "Do you know that I had a design—a strange one perhaps: I wanted to make up a little purse; and then, turning with fixed contempt from those who would make me a thing I cannot name, and those who have proved me to be a fool, I would have flown to the peaceful shelter of a country residence, even to him who said that no

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erroneous conduct could forfeit an orphan's claim to his protection : your excellent grandfather, I mean."

"Most wisely determined," answered Miss Glanville, who saw too well the extreme levity of her friend, and the dangers by which she was surrounded, to allow her to hope that she could escape them by any other means than a temporary residence with a person whom she so highly revered. "But the little purse, my dear Caroline," continued she, "will not be necessary. His income is really affluent ; and the more you allow him to assist you, the more will he feel convinced of your real esteem. Your vivacity will amuse him ; he is sometimes rather dull now that I have left him. Do not sigh so, my best Caroline. In the dwelling of that excellent man tranquillity and religion are constant inmates. You will go to him wretched and overwhelmed with the consciousness of error,

ror, as well in your opinions as in your conduct; and I shall see you return, what nature designed you to be, one of the most excellent of her works."

"What excuse can I make for going?"

"Your health, which has been injured by a town residence, requires the warm sea air of Glamorganshire, to remove the indisposition contracted by late hours, and sudden changes of temperament. Every body who sees you must know that you are either ill or unhappy. I will procure a pressing invitation from my grandpapa; I will read it to Mr. Raymond; I will magnify your illness; and, though I may not alarm his tenderness, I will pique his pride into a consciousness that he ought to *seem* to take care of you. I will obtain his consent to rescue you from a primary evil, by enlarging on a secondary one; and, trust to my address, I will manage
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so well, as not to expose you to disgrace, or Montolieu to danger, by awakening your husband's jealousy."

"You must not scandalize jealousy by associating it with my husband," said Lady Caroline with a look of most pointed rage and contempt. "He has *sold* me to Montolieu."

Sophia wrung her hands in excess of surprize and anguish. "O *wicked* Caroline!" she exclaimed; "how dare you so traduce the reputation of a person whom you have sworn to love and honour? Is there a gentleman, is there a human being, who could be so vile, so abandoned to all sense of shame, to even the delicacy of a savage? This is an artful calumny of the infamous Montolieu's. Profligate wretch! how I detest him!"

"'Tis truth, sad solemn truth," replied the unhappy wife. "He has now left home with the full assurance that
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my ruin will be completed before his return, and another golden mine opened to his extravagance. Nor is my case singular. Many women who have ‘by one false step forever damned their fame,’ were led to the altar of lust by the hand of him whom they selected as the guardian of their honour, and who ought to have perished in its defence.”

“Are these the general manners of the age?” said Miss Glanville with virtuous indignation. “No; an abandoned *few*, who have renounced their nature, and denied their God, shall not be called *the world*. The world shall rise up in judgment against them, hunt these fiends in human shape back to the infernal regions, and purify a *civilized* age and a *christian* country from this worse than *barbarian*, worse than *pagan* contamination!”

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When Miss Glanville's spirits were become a little composed, she advised her friend to set off for Mr. Brudenell's that very evening. But the plan, which appeared so fair in distant perspective, presented many difficulties to the dissipated taste of Lady Caroline when it was proposed to be immediately accomplished. London was very full, and very gay; and, though the roses and woodbines were now in full blow, it would be but dull work to tie up pinks, and visit paupers with an old clergyman in the morning, and to join the footboy and cook at family prayers in an evening. Her companion, indeed, would be highly respectable, and singularly agreeable; but then there would be no variety; and, though it was infinitely more eligible to pass the summer with the worthy Brudenell than with the detested Raymond, there was no urgent necessity for setting out at a moment's

ment's notice. It would argue a blameable distrust of her own virtue; the world would not know how to decide upon her conduct; and surely it would be better to stay and shew those who depended upon her undoing, that their hopes were futile, and their schemes abortive.

These real motives of delay were disguised to Miss Glanville under many specious pretences; and that sincere friend combated them with the greatest strength of argument. Mr. Brudenell would be surprized at the step that she had taken, perhaps displeased, or at his advanced age painfully agitated at his not having had *previous* notice of her visit. Such objections were readily answered. His family affairs, being arranged with elegant and regular œconomy, could never be unsettled; for his mode of living was uniform, and appropriated rather to *constant comfort* than

than *occasional vanity*. Sophia also offered to explain the motive of her visit; and, instead of displeasing him, she would venture to promise the most hearty welcome that admiration and affection could bestow. Lady Caroline could not leave town without discharging her debt to Montolieu. Miss Glanville asked the amount; and, though she found that it exceeded all her savings, she promised to advance it. At length Lady Caroline recollected that it would be impossible for her to go into the country till after Lord Harewood's theatricals had taken place; they were fixed for the following week; and she was to fill a principal character both in the play and the entertainment. All Miss Glanville's intreaties were vain: she positively could not ruin the whole scheme and disappoint the beau monde for nothing.

“Is the peace and happiness of your future life *nothing*?” inquired Sophia.

“ Dear Caroline ! what will the town appear to you, if, instead of a short voluntary exile from it, you are compelled for ever to avoid that part of it which is respectable and worthy ? ”

“ You speak,” answered Lady Caroline, “ as if there were no other alternative. You seem to forget that an abhorrence of reproach, a dread of shame, the pride of virtue, a keen sense of moral rectitude, and a thirst for general esteem, are still inmates of my bosom. Will not all these preserve me from being the thing that I despise ? ”

“ Have they preserved you from being insulted by criminal addresses ? ”

“ I will not say that they have. ”

“ Then surely, Caroline, your paramour never expected that they would prove invincible obstacles to his ultimate success, or he *durst* not have hinted a request which would make you his *irreconcilable* enemy. A matron must have deviated

deviated many steps from the path of strict decorum, before a libertine dare even *solicit* her to repose in the bower of guilt."

"Well, Sophia, I will bear *even* this from you ; and I will submit to any regulations which you shall prescribe, short of immediately hurrying from London. You shall come and live with me while Raymond thinks fit to be absent, and shall be my Argus."

"You know," said Miss Glanville, "that I dare not say I will ; but I will venture to ask my lord's permission to do so. You must now promise me to be constantly denied to Montolieu."

"I would most willingly, if I were sure he would not post me for an insolvent debtor."

"That he shall not do ; I will pay him this evening."

"Heroic girl !" exclaimed Lady Caroline : "Spoken with the spirit of a Clo-

Clorinda ! You have eased my heart of half its cares."

" And Generalissimo Brudenell shall relieve the rest," replied Miss Glanville.

" You remember that you go to him *immediately* after these Kensington theatricals."

" I do," returned Lady Caroline ;
" and will mention my design of leaving London wherever I visit this morning. But, Sophia, one word, before you go, about the poor, mad, wounded, imprisoned, disgraced Selborne. Come confess, half your exuberant friendship for me is owing to my settling his senses, and restoring him to an unblemished reputation."

" I have not thought of him," said Miss Glanville, " since we have begun to talk of other subjects. But I will *confess*, that the more I see of other men of fashion, the more I esteem Lord Selborne."

“ Nothing better than esteem, now that he has forfeited reason, honour, nay life, for your sake?”

“ He would not even possess my esteem if he had,” answered Sophia. “ But when I perceive myself at liberty to act as I wish, you will not censure me for having a faint sense of Lord Selborne’s merits.”

CHAP. XXVI.

Great Vicissitudes of Fortune, and extraordinary Consolations in Affliction.

MISS GLANVILLE meditated on the preceding conversation during her return home. The conclusion which she formed was, that Lady Caroline, though placed in the most perilous situation, had not yet forfeited her nuptial faith. She was convinced that the high sense of honour which, notwithstanding a thousand indiscretions and faults, was paramount in her friend's mind, would, if the laws of chastity had been violated, have repressed those sallies of sprightly humour which still enlivened her conversation. "Caroline," said she, "could not be

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cheerful, if she had forfeited all right to self-esteem."

But, as the baseness of her husband seemed, at least to Miss Glanville, nearly incredible, as the seducer was most assiduous and determined, and as the woman who hesitates is generally undone, Sophia knew that it must be a strong effort which could snatch this devoted victim from infamy. As to those guards of virtue which Lady Caroline had enumerated, Miss Glanville thought them at best but mercenary troops, ready to fight on the side of vice or virtue, just as popular opinion should order them. Miss Glanville most deeply lamented, that in the present exigence she was denied the pleasure of giving the persecuted dove to the safe shelter of the paternal bosom. Sometimes she half resolved to discover Lord Montolieu's guilt to Lord Glanville; but the consideration that people who are much
addicted

addicted to plot and design always suspect artifice in others, and being confident that her voice would soon be drowned, and her opposition subdued, by such an orator as the marquis, and such a politician as the earl, she felt determined not to push matters to extremity; but to have recourse to a measure which she thought must subdue the most matchless effrontery, and even make the Marquis of Montolieu ashamed of himself.

“ Cæsar ashamed! has he not seen Pharsalia?”

Having examined the state of her finances, and found that they wanted 150*l.* of the sum which Lady Caroline owed her perfidious creditor, Sophia determined to apply to Lord Glanville's purse for assistance. The time to ask favours is, when the person whom we supplicate is in the most cordial and benevolent state of mind; and I have

heard it observed by those who have studied the peculiarities of John Bull's character, that he is always so melted to benevolence by the savoury vapour of his beloved beef and pudding, that he never can refuse a request which is made in behalf of a distressed object, if it be presented one quarter of an hour after a good dinner.

Miss Glanville timed her request to her grandfather as judiciously. He had just read in the papers an account of a newly-discovered nostrum, calculated to relieve every one of the numerous, and in some degree *opposite*, complaints with which his lordship was afflicted ; and its virtues had so many and such respectable attestations, that none but an infidel could doubt of its being at least tantamount to the philosopher's stone in medicine. His lordship was debating, whether he should order his chariot and drive to see a knight's lady in Barbican, restored from a paralytic complaint which

which had confined her to her bed three years, and who now possessed a perfect use of her limbs ; to a gentleman of great respectability in Crutched Friars, who, after having been crippled from his infancy by a rheumatic gout, by only taking two bottles of this elixir, rolled down Greenwich hill with great alacrity on Easter Monday, and jigged country dances the same evening for six hours ; or to an eminent lecturer's in Houndsditch, who, after having quite worn away his lungs in the service of the public, and being actually laid out as dead of a decline, was miraculously renovated by an external application of the said doctor's balsam, and can now harangue for a day together, without even using any refined liquorice, as thousands can testify.

Miss Glanville was forced to wait till the earl was informed of the situation.

of Houndsditch, Barbican, and Crutched Friars, and heard it satisfactorily proved that the inhabitants of those places would be very ready to wait on his lordship, to state the particulars of their respective cases, and to testify the merits of their physician, before she could urge her claims on her grandfather's benevolence, in favour of a most pitiable object: a lady of rank and fashion, involved in a species of distress which she could not disclose even to her nearest friends, but which if not speedily relieved would plunge her in absolute ruin. She discovered as many circumstances of the case as she could, without exciting suspicion; and by stating that the unfortunate lady had no other resource than the *known* liberality of the Earl of Glanville, she easily procured the desired remittance. Her success was facilitated by his lordship's satisfaction at

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perceiving that she was noways depressed by the very desperate situation of Lord Selborne, from which he drew an inference extremely favourable to his projects.

Miss Glanville inclosed the notes which discharged Lady Caroline's debt, in the following letter to Lord Montolieu :

“ My Lord,

“ Lady Caroline Raymond requests me to return your lordship the inclosed sum, with which the beneficence of her father has supplied her ; and, though she now feels relieved from a *most painful* incumbrance, she wishes that I would express her sense of the obligation she owes to your *disinterested* liberality in advancing it.

“ I am farther authorized to say, that as she is going to leave London very soon, her numerous avocations will so far engage her that she must de-

cline the honour of seeing you again in Arlington street.

I have the honour to be, with due consideration,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,
SOPHIA GLANVILLE."

Having dispatched her footman with orders to deliver the letter to Lord Montolieu himself, Miss Glanville experienced that degree of satisfaction which arises from bringing a most desirable business into a proper train. "That letter," said she, "frees Caroline from an illicit amour, and me from a most unworthy suitor. Lord Glanville is prevented from being made publicly ridiculous, by assuming a situation unsuited to his declining years and infirm health; and I am permitted to hope, that I may reward the merits of the man I love, if heaven should preserve him in that arduous

duous contest, in which the purest patriotism and the most exalted sense of duty have engaged him."

A train of pensive thought and pious ejaculation followed this reflection, which was at length interrupted by the appearance of company. Lady FitzJohn, Melisandriana, and Sir Timothy Daw, rushed into the room; the two former dressed—but "Garagantua's mouth" could scarcely tell how. They were epitomes of *every* fashion, and assemblages of *every* ornament.

Though the purport of this visit was, to condole with Miss Glanville about poor Lord Selborne's deplorable state, an old acquaintance of the FitzJohns, who was accustomed to elbow itself into the first place, took the lead: I mean *self*. "Oh dear, Miss Glanville, I am so rejoiced to see *you* in London," said madame; and "I am so happy to be *here*," re-echoed mademoiselle. "So

excessively hurried, I have had no time to call on my *old* friends," continued mamma; and "so intensely delighted" was the response of the daughter. "I have been so sought after, so courted, so caressed, so taken up with routs, and ridottos, and petit-soupés and public dejeunerés," said the sage matron; "and I," interrupted miss, out of breath with waiting till this harangue was finished, "have such oceans of the *beautifullest* new dresses; Calypsos, and Aymars, and Togas, and such a *love* of a Bird of Paradise." "My daughter," said Lady FitzJohn in a loud whisper, "is on the eve of marriage to a gentleman of high rank, vast fortune, and great fashion: but hush, not a word; it is a profound secret." "And my mamma," said Melisandriana, attacking Sophia's other ear, "won two hundred pounds in one night at speculation." "And Sir Bronze is so hospitable and his house is so pleasant,

fant, and we see so much good company, and London is so delightful," exclaimed they both, "that we never more can bear that horrid place where we used to vegetate."

"There is a time for all things," observed the wise king of Israel; whence some infer, that he meant there was a time for women to be silent. After Sir Timothy Daw had twice ejaculated, "Charming vivacity," and observed, that "Sir Bronze made him inconceivably happy, by appointing him to attend his *ineestimable* friends, whenever his own engagements imposed on him the painful task of leaving them;" and after Lady FitzJohn had again whispered Miss Glanville, that she would soon address somebody she little thought of by the title of Lady Daw; Melifandriana recollected that she had just been told the *shockingly* story about their poor old friend Lord Selborne that ever was heard. "O, my good-

goodness!" continued Lady FitzJohn, looking hard in Sophia's face, in expectation of a flood of tears, or a fainting fit. "Poor gentleman! drummed out of the regiment I hear, and then shot at the head of it. The whole town talks of nothing else this morning. Done in one of his fits of frenzy they say; the most passionate mortal at times, though he looked so mild and amiable. But it is a family complaint: I know *all* the Selbornes, every one of them was a little cracked."

"I have stood severer trials," thought Sophia, "and will not expose myself to the derision of folly and envy. Happily, the reputation of Lord Selborne defies the assaults of malevolence, and for his safety I will trust in heaven. This tale is too improbable for me to attach any credit to it; and publicity and variation of circumstances add nothing to its weight."

After

After having endured the *consolations* of the FitzJohns with a degree of magnanimity which no young lady could assume who had less confidence in the sterling *merit* of her lover, or a less perfect insight into the characters of her sympathising friends, Miss Glanville coolly observed, that she doubted the truth of the intelligence. Had she doubted whether Miss Melisandriana would soon become Lady Daw, she could not more grievously have displeased her visitors ; for, though they were shocked to death and rendered quite miserable by Lord Selborne's misfortunes, they would have been in a still worse state at hearing the news contradicted. Full of zeal for the authenticity of the account, Lady FitzJohn brought Sir William Evans to town on the occasion, and with barbarous precision threw the gout into the old baronet's stomach, and crowded his chamber with three physicians.

physicians. All this was to no purpose. Miss Glanville recollected, that her own history, when it came out of the hands of this notable annotator, was no more like the reality, than a venerable old classic in a modern translation ; and she was not only ill-natured enough to be incredulous, but to prove by dates and circumstances that the above *facts* were all *falsities*.

Among the various mortifications that society imposes, none are more poignant than those which befall a redoubtable story-teller, when the company, instead of the broad blank face of astonishment and dismay, present the sharp acute look of scrutinizing penetration ; thereby degrading the narrator from the proud superiority attached to a beholder of wonders, to the mean contempt which belongs to a teller of fibs. Lady FitzJohn retired, blaming those who had misinformed her, and promising to contradict
the

the story wherever she went ; but secretly execrating Sophia's ill-breeding in endeavouring to set her right, and attributing her zeal for Selborne's life and reputation to envy at the sight of Melisandriania's conquest. And, indeed, if a young lady could contemplate the gaudy figure and docile manners of Sir Timothy Daw without wishing for just such a husband, she must be an exception to Pope's *infallible* rule, that "Every woman would be queen for life." Never did adoring swain crouch more humbly at the shrine of beauty, and never did beauty toss high her plumed crest with a more determined air of conscious triumph. So ardently had Sir Timothy wooed, so graciously had Melisandriania relented, that nothing but Sir Peter's consent was wanting to complete these auspicious nuptials ; and, as that was considered to be certain, the clothes, the jewels, and the equipage were all bespoke.

spoke. The generous hospitable Sir Bronze, with almost as much impatience as the destined bridegroom, anticipated the happy moment when his cargo of W—— manufacture would be reloaded for Weymouth, where it was agreed the amiable pair should first launch upon the ocean of *haut ton*.

But storms, tempests, and adverse winds, are as frequent in the fashionable as in the nautical world ; and Lady Fitz-John's hopes were fated not to reach the port of safety. Sir Peter's consent never arrived, and it was delayed by a most singular circumstance ; for, though he had only to promise ten thousand pounds to his daughter on her marriage, and ten thousand more on his death, he had the cruelty to answer with an absolute " I will not." Being convinced that the lords of the creation never have recourse to these strong, sententious, and decisive monosyllables, without weighty reasons, I
will

will just state what Sir Peter fancied were conclusive ; namely, that having inspected the state of his affairs, he found he had not one farthing to give ; and that old-fashioned appendage honesty, which must be a most troublesome incumbrance to the husbands and fathers of very fine ladies, forbade him to promise what he could not perform.

When this intelligence, comprised in the above laconic style, was conveyed to Lady FitzJohn, despair and rage took possession of her countenance. After loudly lamenting the obstinacy and cruelty of husbands, she felt obliged to have recourse to her own happy art of invention, to fabricate a good excuse, which should so envelope and disguise the real state of the business, as to prevent any *Daw* in the kingdom from discovering the true reason of Sir Peter's negative. Instead, therefore, of stating a cheerful acquiescence with the wishes
of

of Sir Timothy, Lady FitzJohn announced her husband's desire that their solicitor might be permitted to make some inquiries into the baronet's affairs ; and by this very *mal-à-propos* request she communicated at least as much anxiety and alarm as she herself endured. I question whether even the gentle spirit of Sir Timothy ought not to have been impelled to use some strong language, at a requisition which shewed so little of that harmony and confidence with which gentlemen ought to treat each other upon these occasions, had not lady FitzJohn, who could not only (*Orpheus* like) make asses and owls dance, but could also lull them to sleep again, tenderly hinted, that this rough demand proceeded from Sir Peter's chagrin at being counteracted in his own views for the disposal of his daughter. Then ensued the description of a lover, immensely rich, dreadfully old, and formidably resolute,

folute, from whose petrifying grasp she was anxious to rescue her child. A soft smile and a most encouraging wink accompanied the following whisper : “ But, dear Sir Timothy, as I am convinced that you and Melifandriana are absolutely made on purpose for each other, I will tell you, that though Sir Peter will be sure to find some fault with your title-deeds, just by way of an excuse for his own obstinacy, he is so intensely fond of his daughter, that I know he would not be inexorable if you and Melifandriana should be so rash, so very indiscreet, so inexcusably imprudent, as to set off for Scotland. Not that I encourage such a scheme. Oh no ! I am sure, Sir Timothy you have too high a regard for a young lady’s decorum to take this step ; and I will say, that, however Sir Peter may value himself upon his odious money bags, he is far richer in a wife who never opposes his will, and a daughter

daughter who is delicacy *impersonified*. But it is only to *you*, Sir Timothy, that I would venture to say so much."

Though an orator may make a most eloquent speech, the auditor often retains no more than those few expressions which are best adapted to his own train of thought. Lady FitzJohn was too great an adept in proper accentuation, to omit laying the proper emphasis on her own extreme docility and Miss FitzJohn's uncommon delicacy; but somehow Sir Timothy heard most of Sir Peter's "odious money bags;" and he would certainly have thought a journey to Scotland a most welcome labour, if he could have but found them at the end. He, however, judged that it might be prudent before he took so very decisive a step, to write to a correspondent at W——, inquiring into Sir Peter's real character. For, though Sir Bronze had declared the knight to be an honest, hearty,

heartly, generous old buck, with an excellent heart, Sir Timothy thought such a very amiable character could hardly give occasion for those perpetual, though reluctant, complaints against his avarice and cruelty, which warbled from the tongue of his *incomparable* wife and *inestimable* daughter. Though Melisandriana was all soft despair, though Lady FitzJohn declared that she could not stir out of the house till this business was somehow adjusted, as she could not support the ridicule of being opposed and contradicted by her husband, in the only point on which she ever had set her heart, Sir Timothy waited for his correspondent's reply, before he proceeded any farther than to note in his common-place book the best inns for post horses on the great *north* road.

The letter at length arrived, and contained the information that Sir Peter was indeed a very worthy, honest, good-

tempered man ; and for that reason met universal pity in his misfortunes. Concluding that Sir Timothy had a claim upon the knight's property, the letter proceeded to state, that though the house of FitzJohn, alias Jones, had stopped payment that morning, Sir Peter was so generally esteemed, that great interest was making to settle his affairs ; and many eminent merchants had come forward to assist him, and volunteered their purses to a certain extent, as well as their services. Some of the creditors also had agreed to take ten shillings in the pound for the present, allow the business to go on, and trust to Sir Peter's honour to discharge the remainder of their claims as soon as he was able. Something invidious was added about the folly and extravagance of the rest of the family ; which, if Sir Timothy had not known the ladies, might have prejudiced him against sterling sense and bash-

ful beauty ; but in the present state of affairs these hints were of *no* consequence.

When a revolution takes place, every body feels justified in adopting different measures. Ten shillings in the pound, and well-crammed money-bags, are not synonymous phrases. For the first time since Sir Timothy had the happiness of basking in the warm glow of Miss Fitz-John's smiles, he preferred a solitary breakfast at his lodgings, at a hair-dresser's in Jermyn-street, to the profuse luxury of Sir Bronze's morning repast. Nay, though he had attended the ladies to a rout the preceding evening, from which, on account of there not being more than a hundred people present, all the company went shivering away, he never sent an inquiring message, to hope that the idol of his soul had escaped catching the influenza. He picked his teeth for two hours ; and, having uttered a

most tremendous curse at Sir Bronze for having cheated him out of all his remaining cash, as a last resource he placed himself in a stage-coach, and set off to pass the summer in playing one-and-thirty with his grandmamma in Hampshire.

At three quarters after twelve, the exact time for awakening a woman of fashion, Lady FitzJohn's Betty drew back her lady's curtains with a face of dire dismay, and with an exclamation of "O, Madam! they are off—" "I am glad of it with all my heart," returned her ladyship: "I thought they would go. Sly jade! how snug she kept the secret! but I'll forgive her. Did you help them to pack up? What clothes did she take? when did she go?" Betty answered the most important of these questions first, by declaring, that miss travelled in her violet pelice, and took her amaranthus muslin and her jonquil farfenet. "Dear love," returned my
3 lady,

lady, "how pretty she would look! Did she not smile as Sir Timothy handed her into the chaise?" "Sir Timothy, madam!" was Betty's retort: "why, Sir Timothy is not gone with *miss*." A violent tremor seized the distracted mother while she exclaimed, "Has not Sir Timothy Daw run away with *my* daughter? O dear then who can the wicked man be?" "Oh, a gentleman, madam," answered Betty, "if ever I saw one in all my born days. He was all over gold lace, he had a sword by his side, and I am sure he will take care of *miss* and make her happy. Don't cry, dear my lady; don't cry; he is as handsome a Christian creature as you would wish to look at."

"I must," said Lady Fitzjohn starting up, "see Sir Timothy this very moment." "Dear me," answered Betty, "how odd! Why, Sir Timothy is off too."—"That is right; he shews

a true spirit, and I hope he will overtake the perjured, imprudent, degenerate girl." "No, please your ladyship," said Betty, "he cannot; for he has set off the other road. Mr. Thomas called just now for old-acquaintance sake, to bid us good-bye in the steward's room; and he said that his master was gone south, before I said that our miss was gone north; so they never can meet, he says, till they come to the *rantipoles*."

Lady FitzJohn continued to weep in real distress, and Betty to administer comfort. "O dear madam, don't take on so; there's my good lady, don't. Only think what a comfort a good husband will be to miss, while his honour is in gaol." "His honour in goal!" exclaimed her ladyship; "the girl must be mad. Who are you talking of?" "Oh, of his honour Sir Peter, my poor master that was—Don't your ladyship know that he is off too?"

"Off

“Off too!” repeated her ladyship, “but he cannot take my jointure with him. Which way is he gone?” “Beyond sea, madam, I suppose,” answered Betty, “where every body goes who are plagued with nasty creditors. I thought your ladyship knew it.—And the bailiffs are in the house; but I supposed that Sir Peter had told you all, or I am certain sure I would have kept it close. I suspected something when Mr. Artre said that he was going into Wales to live cheap. If I had but been wise enough to have brought away the pink taffety which your ladyship had just given me! it was turned, and looked so charmingly with my lilac sattincloak; but cook said it would not be genteel in London in the summer; and now if the bailiffs should take it, and ruin a poor servant girl who has her bread to get——”

Lady FitzJohn at last discovered that the chief clerk was arrived in town,

to inform her that her husband's affairs were come to a crisis, and to point out a little humble retreat where she and Melisandriana might reside till the business was arranged. With a gentle sneer of contempt at the worthy soul who could imagine that she should ever want friends or resources, Lady FitzJohn began to exercise the powers of her elevated mind by searching for consolations in her affliction.

After reflecting that Melisandriana was a prudent girl, and not likely to throw herself away upon any body; that Artremidorus was a delightful companion, and would be welcome anywhere; that nothing would hurt Sir Peter; and that, as Sir Timothy had declared off first, no matter what became of him; Lady FitzJohn explored fresh sources of consolation, by asking what the neighbours said of their downfall.

“ Oh

“ Oh madam,” said Betty, attempting to turn her thoughts from the pink taffety, and lilac cloak, “ every body is grieved for his honour ; and they say he will pay twenty shillings in the pound as soon as he is able, and that he will set up again with a better stock than ever.”

“ I have been so teased with twenty shillings in the pound, and stock and book debts, and such barbarous terms, that I hope never more to hear them repeated. I never was ambitious ; a little quiet cottage was all that I wished for ; and as to money, Sir Peter has so teased me about it, that I mean to retire upon my jointure in modest dignity, and bend my mind to philosophical content. But I want to know whether the world calls it a great *crash*.”

“ The greatest, my lady, that ever was known, since old Double broke, and he ruined half Saint Benedict’s parish.”

“ I hate comparisons, Betty : they are a great fault in the conversation of vulgar people. You might have said, ‘ Yes a most terrible *crash*,’ and never mentioned old Double and Saint Benedict’s parish. When a commercial house stops payment it paralyzes a county.— But,” continued Lady FitzJohn, measuring the room with stately steps, “ don’t they talk of the sale ?”

“ Oh yes, my lady : only I thought you could not bear to hear of it. There’s Mrs. Millclack, at the Blue Lion, talks of buying your Worcester china, and her neice, Miss Peggy, intends to bid for our miss’s harp. The tallow-chandler at the corner says he’ll have the chintz chairs and sofa, but Alderman Waddle’s lady has set her heart on them. So there will be fine bidding ; and I do hope there will be money enough somehow or other to set his honour on his legs again.”

“ What

“What vulgar stories do you pick up!” said her ladyship with an air of contempt. “Do you think the furniture of FitzJohn place shall descend, even when second-hand, to such very *low* people? No, Betty; I know that when the catalogues are printed all the country gentry will talk of nothing else. There will be such flocking to the sale, such purchasing, such ardent admiration, such enthusiastic praise! Some will say, what an exquisite taste poor Lady FitzJohn had! Others will wonder how I could collect such a profusion of elegant bagatelles. The mere squire’s wives will wonder what this thing is, and what that can be for; while people who have seen a little of the world will be bidding for Melifandriana’s picture. I dare say her lord (for I make no doubt that she is gone off with a man of the first consequence) will buy it at an advanced price, to shew his fond attachment to his charming

ing wife. Mind, Betty, I give orders that Miss FitzJohn shall not be pursued; for I am confident that she never would so far forget what was due to her family, as to throw herself away upon a man whom nobody knows."

"But Mr. Scribble, madam, waits to take you to Mrs. Morgan's; and he says, that there is a neat little dining-room, and a two pair of stairs bed-chamber——"

"Once for all," returned her ladyship with her arm extended in a posture of defiance, "I go to no Mrs. Morgan's. I enter no two pair of stairs bed-chamber. Not that I mean to be seen in public; that, I own, would not be decent; but I purpose to continue with Sir, Bronze, supporting my misfortunes with dignity, and soothed by the consolations of my friends, till my little cottage is got ready. I shall then slide from an admiring world, shew how a great mind can adapt itself to elegant privacy; and, trust me, Betty, whether
whether

whether I be dressed in a gold muslin, or a dandy ruffet, I shall be Lady FitzJohn still, and always a conspicuous character."

CHAP. XXVII.

Two Novelties : the Contrition of a Man of Fashion ; and a long Letter very much to the Purpose, which must not be passed over.

WHEN Hope steps in to console affliction, by presenting the prospect of some agreeable contingency, we hail her as a spirit of bliss sent to attemper the bitter cup of woe ; but when she is only employed in rocking the cradle of *reposing* folly, we consider her as no better than a garrulous old beldame, and wish her fastened to the lid of Pandora's box for ever.

Leaving Lady FitzJohn in the midst of her Utopian visions, pondering on

the importance of her unknown son-in-law, the friendship of Sir Bronze Harpy, the vast eclat of the bankruptcy, and the pretty simple furniture that she should put into her little white cottage, which was to have green pallisades before it; I return to give some account of the shame, contrition, and disappointment, which Lord Montolieu felt on receiving Sophia's letter.

Though the aforesaid three uncomfortable sensations cannot, generally speaking, be inmates in the bosom of a man of Lord Montolieu's character, on account of so trifling an occurrence as the detection of a criminal intrigue, it is *possible*, considering the very awkward circumstance of being found out by the very lady to whom he had made professions of honourable love, I say it is *merely* possible that he might have felt a little uncomfortable. But here Self-love, the Belial of modern times, stepped in

in to his aid, and whispered, that, as it was very unlikely Lady Caroline would disclose his schemes on her own account, so also it was very probable that Sophia's jealousy might be so very importunate, as to induce her ladyship to acknowledge her debt to the marquis, and to attribute his frequent visits to her to that motive. He persuaded himself, that, waving the partiality which he plainly saw the imperious matron entertained for his person, her knowledge of the world and regard for her own reputation would certainly chill that warm *confiding* friendship which *sometimes* glows in the bosom of village maidens. Convinced, therefore, that nothing more was known, than that he had with a liberal hand supplied the pecuniary wants of a woman of fashion, and construing the intimation that his visits in Arlington-street would be dispensed with, into a hint that the dear
inno-

innocent wished to lure his steps more frequently to Portland-place; at least, determined not to sign his own condemnation by seeming to expect the doom of banishment, he took an early opportunity of availing himself of the earl's general invitation, and glided into his dining-room just at the commencement of the second course. He bowed, or I should rather say *shrugged* to the company in a very elegant manner; and, after displacing two town wits, and three country burgessees, by an earnest request that no soul would take the least notice of him, he fixed himself by the side of Miss Glanville, who, with a degree of astonishment bordering upon confusion, gazed on the marquis's unblushing cheek and unembarrassed deportment.

“Have you,” said the noble Stoic in a sort of audible whisper to Sophia, before she had time to recover her composure,

posure, "seen Lady Caroline Raymond this morning?"

"No.

"Do you know that Raymond is returned, and that he has been successful in the affair that I spoke of?"

"No."

"How generous it was in you, Miss Glanville, to interest yourself so warmly in the happiness of your really amiable, but (pardon the unreserved frankness with which I speak to *you*) in some respects rather blameable friend!"

Sophia was silent.

"I see," continued the marquis, "that I offend your delicacy, by blending my admiration of your conduct with censures of another. But I trust you will allow me to commend the noble and munificent action you have performed. Your letter is a masterpiece of delicacy; and I am confident that when my friend Raymond sees it, he

he will renounce his heterodox notions respecting female friendship."

"May I help you to some fish, Mrs. Smith?" said Sophia, turning her indignant face from Lord Montolieu to her left-hand neighbour.

"I have some thought," resumed the marquis, taking the fish-slice from Miss Glanville, as if determined that she should only attend to *him*, "to mention to Lord Glanville the propriety of endeavouring to settle a part of Lady Caroline's fortune upon herself. They have both acquired habits of expence; very worthy people else. Might I request permission to speak to you upon that subject this evening?"

"No, my lord; I am engaged."

"To-morrow morning then? I would not be too importunate; but give me leave to name an early hour." And then, bowing with the air of one whose request

request was granted, he immediately entered into close conversation with the lady next him, and remained as deaf to Sophia as he had formerly been communicative.

Miss Glanville perceived her lover's full determination to suppose that his visits to her would still be permitted. She waited till the ladies retired to the drawing-room, to say, as she passed the marquis, in a tone too audible to be mistaken by himself, or by any person near him, "My lord, I shall be engaged to-morrow, and *every* other morning."

Montolieu haughtily drew back, and mentally uttered the exclamation of, "The devil is in the woman!" I would not have my fair readers alarmed with the apprehension that they really are possessed by the Prince of Darkness, as often as an incensed lover's looks intimate that dreadful denunciation; for it
oftener

oftener means, as in the present instance, that the woman defies "the foul fiend," than that she submits to him.

Had Miss Glanville stormed, wept, reproached him with his guilty perfidy, or even treated him with a yet more petrifying contempt, when there had been no witness present to mark her arrogance and his degradation, Montolieu would have bowed his head, meekly received the correction, and consoled himself with the hope of future *retribution*. But to be treated with such marked disdain before a large party, at her grandfather's table, when his situation as her professed admirer was well known, nay when the town was actually expecting their speedy marriage, was intolerable.

For nearly a minute he seemed so far to forget his wonted versatility as to be deprived of the power of gilding over this attack; but, perceiving a general laugh ready to burst out at his expence,

pence, he stammered out a complaint against Miss Glanville's exuberant delicacy. "It really," said the marquis with a significant glance, "is too extreme; I am convinced that there is not another woman in England who would have thought of being angry, considering the circumstances. But," continued he, with a face of mock contrition, "I must submit to the penance she imposes; and shall congratulate myself that my future wife only errs on the side of too great decorum.

Curiosity being thus lulled asleep, or rather sent on a wrong errand, Lord Montolieu took a chair next to the earl, who had been too much engrossed by politics to observe what had passed. The acquisition of the marquis added importance to the circle of quidnuncs; and as very few of the hearers had yet passed their noviciate, the *crimes* of administration were swelled to an amount that
could

could only be paralleled by the follies of a Caligula, or the bloody deeds of a Nero. The country burgesſes retired, quite ſhocked at ſuch atrocious wickedneſs, and convinced that the golden days of poor old England were quite over. But the town wits ſaw a little glimmering of hope, if the *pure* virtue of Lord Montolieu, and the *frank* integrity of Lord Glanville, might be intruſted with the helm of ſtate. Nor am I certain, that this conſolatory ſuggeſtion did not receive ſome ſtrength from the patriotic wiſh of *aſſiſting* to heal the wounds of the common weal, in a confidential employment; under the auſpices of their moſt noble friends.

However the maſter of a puppet-ſhew may pique himſelf on his ſkill in pulling the wires, the conteſt between Punch and the baker always ends when the audience retires. No ſooner were *all* the company gone, than the marquis
and

and the earl, leaving England absolutely overwhelmed with ruin, and her pilots in the most complete infamy, drew their chairs somewhat closer, and began to discuss their own immediate affairs; turning *public* projects to *private* account, with as much eagerness as if the *amor patriæ* had never glowed in their bosoms.

The earl's manner soon convinced Montolieu, that his own private adventures were as yet undiscovered; and, knowing the advantage of prepossession, he determined to give his own colouring to the public breach which he feared must take place between him and Sophia. He lamented that the purest and most amiable of female minds was not wholly free from the weakness of her sex. After having been long indulged with all the preference that an unassuming lover could hope from genuine delicacy, suddenly Miss Glanville's behaviour had
changed;

changed ; and, not content with private disdain, she had thought it expedient to treat him with public contempt. For his life, the marquis declared, he could not guess the cause ; unless (but the lady was above jealousy, and he certainly would not suggest such an absurd reason if any other had occurred,) it could be *possible* that his friendly services to another could give Miss Glanville pain. Montolieu then told the story of his attentions to Lady Caroline in the new and much-admired method that I have so frequently described, as effecting greater transformations than ever were performed by magicians and talismans ; for at the end of the narrative, Sophia appeared a fond fair one, agitated by love and suspicion ; the marquis, a mirror of generosity, delicate attachment, and disinterested friendship ; and Lady Caroline a woman of intrigue, who wished to sow discord between a plighted pair.

pair. All the above wonders were achieved by the popular rule of calling that which is *virtuous*, *vice*, and that which is *vicious*, *virtue*; a rule that has made many converts to philosophism; for no one can resist its fascination, who has not previously exercised his faculties in the science of reflection, and studied the distinction between *talking* rightly and *acting* well.

Lord Glanville was too well learned in the marquis's language to be made a complete dupe. And though (as I think my readers must remember) his own morals were not unreasonably strict, he thought the marquis talked rather too much in his own style, to be convinced that he was a prototype of the delicate temperate Scipio, and Sophia a transcript of the suspicious Procris. Nay, though there is a degree of inconsistency in not going through with a system when we have selected and adopted the leading tenets,

Lord

Lord Glanville, while disposed to cancel the ties of nature, and to break the strong bond of religious obligation, was not inclined to adopt *all* the doctrines of the new morality. He not only required vice to be *decent*, but he felt an unaccountable reluctance to the idea of having the name of his discarded daughter inserted in the black scroll of infamy. Not so much as a sardonic smile discomposed his muscles when the marquis asked if he interpreted Sophia's present resentment as the earnest of future favour; and, instead of an intreaty that the noble lover would not scrutinize the fluctuations of exquisite sensibility with too extreme punctilio, the earl coldly answered, that they would talk farther upon the subject at some other time.

While Lord Glanville debated how he should act in consequence of the uneasy sensations which actuated his mind,

Sophia was comforted by receiving a packet from Glamorganshire. The venerable guardian of her youth, solicitous for the happiness of his distant charge, hastened to inform her that he had just received a letter from Lord Selborne. The date of this epistle, Sophia rejoiced to see, was ten days later than that contemptible fabrication in the newspaper, which had for one hour made her completely wretched.

“ Our good friend,” said Mr. Brudenell, “ was perfectly well when he wrote, honoured by peculiar marks of his commander’s esteem, and as happy as a man can be, who, from a sense of duty, has torn himself from what he best loves. He speaks of the business in which the army is engaged as likely to prove very serious, requiring perseverance, strict discipline, and cool courage; qualities which, as he justly observes, can hardly reside in any bosom that
does

does not glow with a sentiment superior to the love of transient praise. I will transcribe a passage from the letter of this truly christian warrior.

‘ We frequently march through defiles, under a burning sun, suffering every privation, and combating difficulties which the least indiscretion on our part would render insupportable. If the soldier, then, felt no nobler impulse than a thirst for individual glory, would he not immediately hazard a painful wearisome life to obtain it, and rush madly upon the enemy who hover about us in small detachments, anxious to wear away our strength in unprofitable skirmishes? would he stand under arms for many hours, patient and collected; while our watchful foe, alarmed at the formidable front we present, and fearful of attacking us, employs every device to allure us from the advantageous ground that we have chosen? It is on these occasions,

sions, when I have seen my brave companions fainting with fatigue, yet uttering no complaint, burning with military ardour, yet passive as infant gentleness, that I have felt the superiority of that virtue which proceeds from principle, as opposed to the frothy effervescence of sentiment and feeling; and I have learned, not merely the value of military discipline and subordination, but the propriety and necessity that we should all be early instructed in the admirable rule of always regulating our actions by the desire of *doing what we ought*. Much has been lately said respecting our being creatures of habit, and many popular theorists build our virtues on no firmer ground; forgetful of this consideration, among many others, that contingencies will most probably arise to break those habits, and to form new combinations; whereas nothing external can shake the deeply-rooted principle that is founded
on

on a clear conception of what is right, and a certainty that we are accountable creatures. Let not our virtues depend upon our habits, but rather form them.

‘ Dear Brudenell, you will say that these reflections favour more of the college than of the camp ; but, after several weeks of incessant fatigue, we enjoy comparatively a little ease, by the capitulation of one of the enemies’ strongholds ; and I have now leisure to consider the means by which that desirable event was expedited. These, under Providence, were, great circumspection, coolness, temperance, perseverance, self-command, and a generous sacrifice of individual feeling to public good. If I had now time to cherish any other sentiment than friendship and admiration of my brave compatriots, who cheerfully surrender their bodies to want, disease, torture, and death, and their minds to constant anxiety and wearisome exertions,

tions; to purchase peace, honour, and safety for their native country; O Brudenell! if I could divert my thoughts from the present scene; I would execrate those drones of peace, rather let me say those pestiferous cankers, who, while we protect their wealth from spoil, and their persons from danger, slander our exertions, and degrade the character of a British soldier; terming him a licensed marauder, who sells his own freedom, and trades in the blood and misery of his fellow-creatures.'

"I have transcribed enough of Lord Selborne's letter, Sophy," continued Mr. Brudenell, "to convince you that he is neither a Drawcansir nor a Bobadil. If you assure me that your sentiments have undergone no alteration from the more enlarged view you have lately had of society, and that no other admirer has come forward with (at least in your estimation) juster pretensions to

your heart, I will send you the whole letter; and when I write to him I will endeavour to furbish up a little of my old Latin, and in one short distich make the myrtle, the laurel, and the olive, unite in a chaplet for the *returning* hero.

“ I send you no farther instructions for your own conduct; I only repeat what I have already said. While you cannot act as you would, endeavour to be content with acting as you can. Persevere, therefore, in the practice of the *passive virtues*. I do not caution you against Lord Montolieu; your knowledge of his principles and conduct does not prevent you from thinking him capable of a crime of the blackest die; and I need not say, that he is not the man with whom I could intrust my Sophia's happiness.

“ You intimate a possibility that Lady Caroline Raymond may soon fly to me for an asylum from perfidy and distress.

I am deeply concerned for her afflictions ; but, unless you have very strong reasons for calling Raymond the most despicable of men, I should intreat that this step may not be taken without his *concurrence*. At least, be careful that I am not censured for favouring a clandestine elopement. We must never do evil that good may come of it. Lady Caroline has two natural protectors, a husband and a father ; and it is only in the event of their having violated or renounced their indubitable rights, that she can be justified in seeking another guardian. If you are fully convinced that this is the case, I am ready to receive and console her, as it is my duty to do every child of affliction who solicits my aid. But you must distinguish, my dear child, between starts of petulance and total renunciation of affection ; nor will you confound venial errors, or even occasional crimes, with
absolute

absolute dereliction of principle. With proper delicacy you have refrained from giving me a minute description of her present situation, and have contented yourself with saying that it is most pitiable and dangerous. How forcible and pathetic is your concluding reflection, that ‘ Poor Caroline is neither directed nor consoled by religion !’

“ Though you flatter yourself with the hope that my instructions may lead her to the saving knowledge of divine truth, especially if I could communicate them while her heart is softened by sorrow and satiated with dissipation ; and though I should rejoice from the bottom of my soul to conduct this interesting but very culpable wanderer to the safe shelter of the Christian fold, I greatly fear that the success of my efforts will not realize your hopes. You speak of her deep sense of her former errors : to me, she seems rather mortified than pe-

nitent. You praise the openness with which she avows her faults: is there nothing of pride in that apparent frankness? She is weary of the world, you say; my love, she has only quarrelled with the shape that it now wears. Change the magic picture, remove a few difficulties that now impede her progress, or present pleasure to her in some new form, with fresh combinations, and will she then still preserve irreconcilable enmity? No, Sophy; when young persons of Lady Caroline's turn of mind tell you that they are tired of life, I compare them to children who sit moody in a corner because they have just broken their favourite play-thing. Supply them with another toy, and past chagrin will be soon forgotten.

“ Of all the principles that it behoves parents to inculcate in early life, religion requires chief attention, not only on account of its superior importance, but
because

because it is rarely acquired in advanced life, or improved by our commerce with the world. When you consider the total change of ideas, opinions, inferences, reflections, pursuits, studies, and habits, which must take place before an infidel can become a Christian, you will not wonder that so many unhappy people continue blind to what we consider self-evident truths; and you will readily account for the perverted zeal with which the unhappy advocates for the cold and miserable system of deism labour to prevent parents from imbuing the minds of their infant offspring with what *we* term knowledge, and *they* call prejudice. But you will feel both grieved and indignant at Christian parents, who can be so far misled by these sophists, as to suppose that they are really performing a part of their duty, by depriving piety of its most fervent, sweet, and acceptable morning sacrifice: I mean the hopes

and affections of early youth. Even when the wheat is sown in *due* season, the tares will be afterward surreptitiously introduced ; but our hope of the harvest must be small, if we permit the enemy to scatter his poisonous principles *before* we cast in the good seed.

“ How easy is their task, who, with well-directed minds, and bodies inured to proper discipline, enter the Christian vineyard in the morning of life, and continue their pleasing toil till the sun gently declines ! They feel no reproach for mispent hours, they have not to regret that, while they idled in the market-place, the weeds took firmer root, the soil grew more impenetrable, and the clusters withered for want of support. They will never be alarmed at the prospect of having much to do, when the night is rapidly advancing ‘ in which no man can work.’ Those who never found pleasure in indolence never find
pain

pain in labour. They who have always been accustomed to think rightly have no perverted understanding to combat, no misapplied memory to correct, no licentious imagination to curb, no perplexed judgment to regulate, no contumacious will to oppose. They have only to check inclinations that are accustomed to submit to the control of reason and conscience, and to regulate affections which have long been directed to their most proper views.

“ When you consider all this, Sophy, you will perceive that your friend has a steep up-hill path before her; and that, in order to fulfil the high end of her existence, she must with *enfeebled* strength exercise *greater* perseverance. That she may be supported in this most arduous conflict, is my earnest prayer.

“ On reconsidering your letter, I find that you wish me to assure Lady Caroline that I will gladly receive her. I
willingly

willingly communicate this assurance through you, subject to the limitation which I have before mentioned, and leaving even that dependent on your discretion. I would not seem to press forward with fanatical impertinence, or enthusiastical quixotism; no, not even in the most sacred cause; for I know that injudicious interference always defeats the purpose of its own labours. If Lady Caroline be deserted by those who should save her, tell her, in that kind language which should always be used to real distress, that she will ever find a faithful friend in

“ANTHONY BRUDENELL.”

CHAP. XXVIII.

*The Efforts of Female Heroism to save a
sinking Friend.*

FORTIFIED by the sage suggestion of her venerable guardian, rejoiced to find the cloud which malice and treachery attempted to throw over her lover's reputation so happily dispersed, and trusting in Providence for his future protection, Miss Glanville quitted her chamber, ready to enter upon the duties of the day, and desirous of dispensing to all around her the serene cheerfulness of her own well-regulated mind.

Hearing that the earl breakfasted in his chamber, she hastened to pay another
early

early visit to Lady Caroline, to whom she wished to communicate Mr. Brudenell's promise of protection, and to confirm her wavering resolution. She found her friend in a pensive posture; her eyes fixed on vacancy; an expression of resentment bordering on frenzy in her look; and perfectly insensible to the splendor of a gold muslin which Chenille was displaying, and soliciting her instructions how to decorate with tassels and fringe.

“O, welcome! most welcome!” said Lady Caroline, starting from her reverie at the sound of Sophia's voice: “You have relieved me from an embarrassment the most distressing. I was considering,” (continued she, pausing a moment and then seizing hold of the muslin, by way of giving a colour to her speech,) “whether my dress,—aye—if it should resemble Elvira's, or whether I should not give it a janty, comic air.”

Miss

Miss Glanville inquired on what occasion it would be worn ; and being told at the Kensington theatricals, and that Lady Caroline was to take the part of Mrs. Sullen, she gave some slight directions. Chenille withdrew ; and Sophia, fixing her eyes on her friend's face, asked if she persevered in her design of retiring into Glamorganshire as soon as the present engagement was over.

Lady Caroline assured her that she did, and expressed her wonder that there should be the least doubt of the *stability* of her resolution. Miss Glanville explained, by observing, that she was informed that Raymond was returned, and she hoped a reconciliation *might* have taken place.

“ Have you been studying the Tales of the Genii, child ? ” returned the haughty matron ; “ or have you read your favourite Almorán and Hamet till you forget that it is fabulous ? I must
gravely

gravely tell you, that the good magicians have now lost all their power ; the roc has flown away with the talisman ; and when once a man becomes an ape, there is no possibility of his being disenchant-ed."

"I have," said Sophia, "a letter from my grandpapa Brudenell. He tenderly loves you ; and I trust that in his dwelling you will soon recover your peace of mind."

"Aye," replied Lady Caroline, "when Astolpho takes a voyage to the moon, and fetches my wits back."

"Dearest Caroline," returned Miss Glanville, who could not but notice the deep despair which her friend's forced wit ill disguised : "I am persuaded that the time will come when you will bless heaven for those corrections which have led you to true enjoyment. To absent yourself from transitory pleasures, is nothing."

"Nothing

“ Nothing!” answered Lady Caroline. “ I could hide me in a hermit’s cell, and live on pulse for ever. I could be content to be banished from the face of every human being. I could wander through woods, the squirrel and the thrush my sole companions. I could endure every misery, suffer every privation, submit to every evil, except” (putting her hands before her glowing cheek) “ being publicly insulted by the man I despise.”

She then proceeded to inform Miss Glanville, that Raymond had returned home in the worst humour possible; and that, in spite of her positive determination to preserve appearances, he provoked her by his insolence, and piqued her by his sneers before a large circle, till he so far threw her off her guard as to make her say, that new-made consequence generally sat ill. He resented it warmly, and immediately declared that she should not act at Lord Harewood’s ;
and

and on her saying that she knew her own inherent rights, and knew also what would constitute propriety of behaviour in a husband, he seized her by the arm, led her to her own apartment, and actually turned the key upon her in the hearing of many of her household.

“My *prison*,” continued she, “has been opened this morning; and he has sent me word, that now I know his will I may act as I please. Creeping reptile! How servile was he once, when, destitute of house and property, he fawned for food, and flattered for a couch to rest on. How stately walked the despot to bind, with the chain I gave him, the hand that made him independent!”

Sophia joined in those strong censures which the ingratitude and violence of Raymond merited. Finding that he was then at home, she offered to brave his fury, by immediately informing him of Lady Caroline’s design of retiring
to

to Mr. Brudenell's; and hinted, that steps should be taken to secure the arrangement of a separate maintenance.

"No," Lady Caroline replied scornfully, "I ask no leave, I settle no arrangements. The audience to-night will consist of the first people; before them I will assert my freedom, and shew that I can retort brutality with contempt. To-morrow morning, in the face of day, I will step into my own carriage, and quit London, I hope for ever."

"You cannot think of performing to-night in your present perturbed state of mind?" observed Miss Glanville.

"Why not? Can you doubt that I shall *feel* my character? This event is lucky, as it will give new energy to my talents. I know that I shall strongly mark my contempt of a brutal husband. I shall excite sentiments that will not be easily forgotten. Raymond will be pointed out as 'the base Indian, who threw a pearl away, richer than all his tribe;'

tribe;' and I shall be recollected as a meteor, whose transient corruscations shot inimitable brilliancy, and then was seen no more."

Perceiving that every attempt to dissuade would only confirm a resolution so congenial to the present feverish state of her mind, Sophia resolved to quit that topic; and, after repeating what passed between herself and Lord Montolieu, she asked Lady Caroline whether she had seen him since her last visit. "Only at Lord Harewood's, when we rehearsed," was her reply. Miss Glanville started at this intelligence. "Surely," said she, "he is not one of the performers?"

"Most assuredly he is," answered her ladyship. "Not one of the diletanti could rise to the spirit, ease, and fire of Archer, but himself."

"And do you intend to play Mrs. Sullen to his Archer, in your *present* situation?"

"Am

“ Am I, in my present situation, to tell all the world that I have *private* reasons for not doing so ? Is there any harm, any crime, in so doing ? ”

“ It is a character,” replied Miss Glanville, “ by no means compatible with *strict* female delicacy ; for it represents a married woman venturing carelessly to the very verge of actual guilt. But *now*, when your breach with Mr. Raymond is public, when Lord Montolieu is more than suspected of having base designs on you, when some of the scenes are very highly coloured, when they are suited too well to your own circumstances, surely, Caroline, this is more than blameable ! this is rejecting all the guards and out-works of chastity. How can you support the laugh which your wit raises, the inquiring eyes that will be fixed upon your countenance, the whispers that will circulate at your expence ? ”

“ I will

“ I will take care to direct the laugh and the whisper to the vulgar tyrant who merits them. Inquiring eyes I cannot shun ; nor need I ; for where there is no guilt, malice and censoriousness must be disappointed ; and as to the highly coloured scenes to which you allude, I can go through them without fearing for the stability of my own honour. Can virtue be really inherent in the soul, when it needs so many guards from prudence, so many defensive out-works ? But that I know your heart, Sophia, I should term your timid cautions an acknowledgment of secret depravity.”

“ I know myself a weak frail being,” said Miss Glanville, “ and therefore I never rely on my own strength. My code of morals teaches me, that those who rush wilfully into temptation are accessory to their own destruction. They who will *invite* the tempter, cannot hope
for

for the assistance of that power who alone can enable them to *resist* his efforts. If I know myself, I trust I have an inborn abhorrence of vice ; but this I know, that familiarity with vice diminishes that abhorrence, and I will not venture to gaze on it too near. Ah Caroline ! were you accustomed in your daily exercises of devotion, to supplicate that you may be delivered from evil, you would not dare to sport on the edge of a precipice, lest (to punish your presumption) the hand that now *sustains* you should be withdrawn."

"Sophia," returned Lady Caroline, "act according to your own system, which presents a cheerless, pitiable, contemptible view of humanity ; which treats us but as children of a larger growth, and annihilates the glorious sentiments of honour, emulation, enterprize, and and self-esteem."

“Rather say, *regulates* them,” interrupted Sophia; “for Christianity admits those sentiments, only directing them to proper objects, and confining them within proper bounds.”

“Yes,” said Lady Caroline, “you would persuade me that we are but as ‘pilgrims and strangers on earth;’ is not that the term? and that we should consequently behave with the precaution of aliens from our native country. It may be as you assert; but, since I cannot feel your firm expectation of another world, let me regulate my conduct by what I think of this. If I have not your strong persuasion of responsibility, I have, according to my own judgment, a more genuine and disinterested abhorrence of guilt. My soul disdains the name of harlot; and I turn with horror from the cold pity which affected virtue pretends to bestow on imprudent vice. Can you suppose that I will not take care that
the

the action by which I mean to hurl shame on my enemies, shall not lead them to triumph by terminating in my destruction? Raymond considers me a credulous fool; he found me so once, and the accusation, though *base*, is *just*. The world looks upon me as a slave to my passions; for it knows nothing of me, except my elopement with a man who could boast of nothing but my preference. Montolieu boasts that my inordinate pride provokes assault; be it mine to shew him that pride can be invincible."

"Cannot your exalted understanding, dear, but much-erring Caroline," rejoined Miss Glanville, "distinguish between the transient burst of applause which talents, wit, or vivacity, extort from perhaps unwilling minds, and the sober esteem that constantly attends calm propriety of conduct? Suppose you make Raymond ridiculous for being a bathaw,

and yourself admired as a belle esprit, does not his disgrace still adhere to you? The world must remember that you once preferred him, mean and despicable as he is, to parental duty, strict propriety, and all the splendid prospects which your birth and fortune permitted you to command. The satirical will say, that Lady Caroline Glanville fancied there was a magical potency in the name of Raymond, but that she detected its insignificance when she had made it her own. The invidious will observe, that you and duty are always at variance; and that, to make you renounce any line of conduct, it is sufficient to tell you that it is obligatory. Let me conjure you to abandon your scheme of personating a rural demirep, while your heart is torn by real sorrows. Even if you should be a good dissembler, which I much doubt; even if your spirit, your vivacity, your pointed sarcasm, should gain great ap-

plause from the injudicious *many*, the discerning *few* will be infinitely more disposed to esteem and pity the wife who devotes to retired dejection, the evening previous to a separation from her wedded partner, than if she had shewed herself to the world, triumphing in her insensibility to such a *severe* misfortune."

"I have listened to you with deep attention;" replied Lady Caroline; "and a few words shall convey my *determination*. Pity and esteem are not the sentiments which I wish to inspire. I question whether I could endure the former, at least from any other than yourself and Mr. Brudenell. I have seen enough of the world to know, that it is not in general better than myself. I was taught that the many are not capable of feeling esteem; and when they profess it, they commonly bestow it as a *cold* reward on some good sort of creature whom nobody cares for. Admiration and disgust,

love and hatred, are the qualities that universally predominate in the higher walks of life. Let me but secure admiration, and my faults will be glossed over and forgotten. If I be but denominated a most charming creature, my patent will be made out, and I shall be licensed to trade in folly. Your world, Sophy, and mine differ as widely as our codes of faith. Yours requires the timid prudence that never goes wrong, mine the exalted genius that sometimes rushes on a great extravagance. See," said she displaying her arm, on which the marks of Raymond's violence were still visible, "you would have me hide this from the world, and perish like the Spartan boy by *concealing* the vermin that gnaws my vitals. - And from what motive? from the poor hypocrisy of refusing to own that I have been deceived. No, Sophy! this arm shall not care for the traitor, nor will I raise it in the mockery of prayer to supplicate

supplicate blessings for him who blesses not me. I renounce his protection. I defy his authority, as firmly as I abhor his ingratitude, and despise his meanness. Urge me not therefore, by any considerations of regard to my own character, as far as that is connected with my *supposed* duty to Raymond. The bond between us is broken. If there be any other tie by which you would persuade me, name it."

A thought at this instant struck Miss Glanville: could the earl be induced to express an interest in his daughter's conduct, possibly she might be rescued from that reckless despair which now seemed to hurry her into the wildest extravagance. She knew that his lordship had a general dislike to women of rank exhibiting their persons on a stage; and she thought the peculiar circumstances of Lady Caroline's situation would certainly confirm that dislike to abhorrence.

“ You have a father,” said Miss Glanville to her friend. “ Would his disapprobation determine you ?”

“ Have I a father ?” exclaimed Lady Caroline with pathetic eagerness. “ Has he not renounced me ? Think you he so far cares for me, as to signify *one* desire respecting his forlorn, destitute, friendless daughter ?”

“ No, not absolutely renounced you. I have hopes, strong hopes. Give me your word that you will be guided by his decisions ; and I trust I shall be able to communicate his pleasure to you, perhaps his sanction to your residence with my grandpapa.”

“ I do promise,” replied Lady Caroline ; “ but you must pledge me your honour to tell me *his* wishes, not *your* own. Let me but have the plea that I am guided by his counsels, let me but shew the world that I am not a wretched being deserted by all my natural guardians,

ans, a thing whom any one may insult with impunity, and the tempest of my soul will be calmed."

"Blessed thought!" said Miss Glanville, clasping her arms around Caroline's neck. "I will soon hasten back with these joyful tidings."

She hurried out of the room, and in her way to her carriage was accosted by Mr. Raymond. Miss Glanville's dislike of that gentleman was so far heightened by his unmanly behaviour to his wife, that she could scarcely command her feelings sufficiently to return a civil answer to his salutation. He had the indelicacy to detain her some minutes with loud complaints against Lady Caroline's violence and indiscretion, uttered in the hearing of the servants; and declared his positive determination to be separated from her immediately, as there was no enjoying one moment's peace with such a Xantippe in his house. He proceeded with matchless effrontery to state his in-

tention of waiting on Lord Glanville to concert measures for some future provision for his termagant daughter, declaring that he had never known quiet since he confided his domestic happiness to the care of this ill-chosen partner. If Miss Glanville's features could have conveyed the strongest expressions of anger and contempt, she certainly would have endeavoured to have made Raymond sensible that she felt such emotions ; especially as it occurred to her mind, that this behaviour was designed to pique his wife's indignant spirit into a compliance with Montolieu's criminal addresses. But the sentiment of abhorrence for the mean, treacherous Raymond was lost in that of compassion for the unhappy, endangered Caroline ; and she hastened to use the only means in her power to rescue the impetuous lady from what Sophia justly thought most imminent danger.

Her

Her efforts were unhappily unsuccessful; but let it not be supposed that my heroine was unskilful in the art of persuasion, or that she did not with eloquent tenderness exert her powers in a cause in which the strong feelings of affection, and a sincere zeal for the safety of female honour were alike interested. If selfishness could have renounced its views of aggrandisement, if obduracy could have relented, or if a hardened offender could have pardoned a comparatively venial sin, Lord Glanville would have caught his child to his heart, and screened her from the miseries that surrounded her. But no sooner had Sophia named her treatment from Raymond, and her conjecture that he and Montolieu were in treaty for Lady Caroline's destruction, than, fencing his heart with the cold maxims of suspicion, he began to sift Sophia's motive for charging the marquis with such a nefarious

L 6 design.

design. He charged her, on her duty, to declare, whether she was ready to renounce Selborne and marry Montolieu, in the event of his being proved innocent of this horrible accusation. Though convinced of the marquis's guilt, Miss Glanville thought it would be disingenuous to give that as her *sole* reason for his rejection, which was only a *corroborating* circumstance; and she frankly answered, that she would not make such an engagement, though she would willingly promise never to plight her faith to Selborne without the earl's permission. Lord Glanville affected to consider this as a refinement in obstinacy, and a sophism suited to the subtlety of an artful character. He cautioned her and her friend, by the ardour of their attachment, to beware of involving him in any dispute with a nobleman whom he esteemed; and, after expressing his conviction that Montolieu's vir-

tue

tue would resist female blandishments, and triumph over female calumny, he attempted to retire, wishing Mrs. Raymond success in her present line.

“ I did not,” said he, “ predict the highly honourable uses to which she would devote her talents, when I sought out the first masters to make her move with grace, and speak with propriety: but, as she aspires rather to imitate than to *be* a woman of fashion, I wish her a full house and numerous plaudits. If she pursue this line, she *may* one day find it serviceable; and, for the sake of former friendship, I will certainly take a score of gold tickets always at her *benefit*.”

“ You must not,” exclaimed Miss Glanville, dropping upon her knees as the earl attempted to pass her, “ you must not, out of anger to me, desert poor Caroline at this awful crisis of her fate. Her situation is most distressful.

One

One kind word from you is the only means of rescuing her from despair."

"Would my kind words have been important, unless the god of her idolatry had ceased to utter any? I predicted all this. Yet you, Sophia, with this example before your eyes, presume to doubt my superior discernment into human nature."

"Think not of me *now*, my lord; I never will be guilty of active disobedience. We will talk over my concerns some other time. Suffer me to conduct Caroline to your presence. In your house she will be safe from insult."

"See!" returned his lordship, "I again say, behold the consequences of disobedience. I could *once* have interfered with effect. I certainly could have taught the person who insulted her to repent of his temerity. But my arms are now bound behind me; she has chosen another protector."

"And

“ And that protector has betrayed his trust.”

“ As I predicted, you should add. See ! warning upon warning ! yet you Sophia, with all your high pretensions to prudence and duty, rush with your eyes open into the same gulf.”

“ She was very wrong ; she now acknowledges it. But do not, my lord, check the advances of the returning penitent. Allow her to hope that she is not an absolute outcast. If you turn from her when she seeks your aid, despair may drive her to steps which you will for ever deplore. Suffer me to tell her that you are interested in her fate. If you refuse to see her, deign to be her adviser. She feels herself an insulated being, without a friend.”

“ You alarm me, Sophy. How shamefully then must she have behaved ? I see, girl, you are plotting to environ me with innumerable difficulties. I may
involve

involve myself in a dispute with a man whose principles are worse than a highwayman's; or I may commit the honour of my house, by patronizing a woman whom I may one day meet in the purlieus of Covent Garden. I once intended to forgive her; for my soul pants after universal peace and amity; but it is now impossible; her conduct forbids it. I may be immersed in a thousand perplexities; I foresee a breach with Lord Montolieu, a rencontre with Raymond, an absolute necessity of defending a most profligate woman: I may be implicated in all that creature's future crimes,—I who have all my life preserved an unspotted reputation."

Miss Glanville here loosened her arms, which had hitherto clung round her grandfather's knees, and caught hold of a chair for support. He took this opportunity of hurrying from the amiable suppliant, exclaiming, "You
now

now see the fruits of your own perverseness. You would countenance a rebel contrary to my wishes, and she has not only infected your bosom with her wretchedness, but she has also disturbed this peaceful, happy dwelling, and made it the abode of strife and contention. You must, however, bear me witness, that it is not my fault. I have acted through this whole affair with uniform propriety and integrity."

"May I be protected from the decisions of such a judge!" said Miss Glanville, rising, and endeavouring to compose her agonized spirits. "Inexorable father! devoted, undone friend! oh that in the moment of blind resentment and infatuated credulity, you could but have foreseen the train of evils which would follow only one rash step! compelled to solicit the protection that you spurned, and cruelly denied that shelter which
even

even brute animals ‘ fly to in the hour of danger !’

After frequently debating how she should act, and considering that by again visiting Lady Caroline she should only still further exasperate Lord Glanville, and do that Lady no real service, she dispatched the following letter to Arlington-street :

“ *To Lady CAROLINE RAYMOND.*”

“ My ever dear Caroline,

“ I have not been quite so successful a pleader as I could wish. I was indiscreetly warm, and so diminished the effect of my application ; but will certainly try again.

“ I have gained some ground. It is apparent that your father thinks it advisable that you should not appear at Lord Harewood’s as an actress this evening, but I cannot add that he has authorized me to tell you so.

“ I know

“ I know my grandpapa Brudenell will most gladly welcome you. With him you will need no other claim than your misfortunes ; and as what passed yesterday at your own house must be public, no reason can be wanted for your excusing yourself from that unopportune engagement, and setting out *immediately* for Glamorganshire. I scarcely think that Raymond would oppose you.

“ I conjure you, my Caroline, do not imagine that no one is interested in your fate. By all the love you ever professed for me, I entreat, that if you do persevere in your dangerous resolution, you will not only remember that the man who attempts to seduce a married woman from the path of duty, however elegant and specious, is an atrocious villain ; but that you can neither sin nor sorrow without exciting the deepest commiseration and the most lively sympathy in the bosom of your faithful and affectionate,

“ SOPHIA GLANVILLE.”

To

To the above epistle, Lady Caroline immediately sent the following reply :

“ *To Miss GLANVILLE.*

“ I am dressing for my part ; my appearance will be splendid, and my mind adorned by the glowing feelings of rage, disappointment, and, I think I could add, madness.

“ Raymond, I cries out ; my prison doors are opened. My perfidious husband first exasperates me to frenzy, and then leaves the maniac to act as fury drives. My inexorable father deceives, upbraids, and abjures me. My lover, as you term him, the atrocious villain, hopes to take advantage of their cruelty. Such is my situation : but unworthy treatment strengthens, not weakens me.

“ I shall triumph, Sophia, and subdue the pride of the boastful libertine who can only insult the fools that *confide* in his treacherous vows. I shall prove
my

my own stability, give the world a just idea of my intrinsic worth, cover the despicable Raymond with confusion, show the proud Earl of Glanville that I can be my own guardian; and I will then retire satisfied with myself, and worthy of *your* esteem. If I fall, I know I shall lose your love, and I will not accept your pity.

“CAROLINE.”

CHAP. XXIX.

Containing Events which every Reader must anticipate. Salutary Counsels.

IF a ray of hope darted into Sophia's mind at the perusal of Lady Caroline's epistle, from the consideration that she *saw* the evils which awaited her, it was immediately extinguished by an apprehension of the effects of despair and rage on so haughty a spirit, supported by a most dangerous confidence in the unconquerable firmness of her own virtue. "She will call her triumph incomplete," thought Miss Glanville, "unless she goes on to the utmost verge of safety. Montolieu, though daring, is specious and artful; and, unless I am much deceived,

ceived,

ceived, he will find an ally in Caroline's heart, prompt to believe, and ready to forgive, though I know her indignant spirit would disdain the imputation."

Contrary to the usual custom of the Glanville family, the evening was spent in perfect retirement. The earl, petulant and thoughtful, endeavoured to conceal his chagrin and self-dissatisfaction under an affectation of sarcastic humour. He ridiculed the trepidation of the new performer, mimicked the applause of the audience, and declared that he was in pain lest Montolieu should not be able to withstand the violent siege which he understood would be commenced against him, by several others of the company, almost as handsome as Mrs. Raymond. The thoughtful Sophia, while seemingly employed at her netting, frequently turned aside, to wipe away the tear which succeeded her earnest prayer, that

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the events of that evening might not obscure the colour of Lady Caroline's future days with the sombre shade of constant remorse.

Miss Glanville waited impatiently for the morning, intending to hasten to Arlington-street at a very early hour. Beside her anxiety to see her friend, she was desirous to escape any positive prohibition from Lord Glanville, whose *connivance* she was resolved to consider as a sort of tacit consent, so long as it was in her power. But this morning he sent her a message, that she must decline making any visits that had not his sanction.

Convinced that it was best not to irritate by unnecessary, and indeed useless opposition, Sophia yielded with apparent cheerfulness; but, determined that her obedience should be literal, and strictly confined to the terms of the command,

mand, she dispatched the following billet to Lady Caroline :

“ Being at present prevented from calling on you, I will only ask how you do, and at what hour you set off for Glamorganshire ? ”

The servant soon returned, and brought two words written on the back of his lady's note with a pencil : they were, “ Never ! Farewell. ” — He stated, that the house was in extreme confusion, and that it was with great difficulty he could prevail that his note should be delivered. He added, that Mr. Raymond read it before it was carried up to Lady Caroline.

A deadly paleness and universal tremor seized Miss Glanville as she heard this alarming intelligence. She rushed into the earl's apartment with impetuous terror ; and, again throwing herself on

her knees before him, intreated that she might, if it were for the last time, hasten to the unhappy Caroline. "She has no friend," said she, "but me in the world. She is evidently in extreme distress. See with what a trembling hand she has marked these two words. Some new misfortune has happened: I cannot desert her in calamity. Suffer me to go, my lord, or my fears will overpower my reason."

"That they already have," said Lord Glanville, affecting for some time great composure, though he really trembled as much as Sophia. "Help! instant help!" he exclaimed: "She has thrown the gout into my stomach! Another such a spasm, and I am a dead man."

I would not have the reader suppose that the earl's maladies were indeed arrived at such an awful crisis as he described. He had in reality so very strong an antipathy to dying, that he always
fancied

fancied every new sensation an immediate harbinger of the king of terrors; and, though he now drew near the close of that term of years at which, "fifty summers ago," he fancied he should be satiated with life; though his tottering limbs, silver hairs, decaying senses, increasing ailments, and many other premonitory warnings, might have convinced him that the bowl would soon be broken at the fountain; nay, though he was always expressing his weariness and disgust at the world, he clung to it as the almost expiring mariner clasps the last fragment of the vessel which has wrecked him on some inhospitable shore.

Miss Glanville felt too much for Caroline, speedily to attend to the earl's terrified exclamations for immediate help. Indeed, she was inclined to suspect that they were merely a subterfuge, intended to frustrate her petition, by the

favourite method of evasion. While she applied hot flannels, and presented him with a large dose of gout cordial, she continued to reiterate her request, which Lord Glanville, with equal pertinacity, answered only with groans. This provoking and ill-timed duplicity increased her agitation, while his lordship's real or affected anguish gradually subsided, and he seemed to sink into a slumber.

Miss Glanville now hastened to obey a summons from Lady Susan Wilson, who wished to speak with her upon an affair of great importance. That lady met her young friend with an air of affectionate tenderness. Struck by the visible anxiety of Sophia's countenance, "I see," said she, "that the purport of my visit has been anticipated. I will not offend your well regulated mind by impertinent consolations. Only, my dear Miss Glanville, if I can be of any service, command me."

Sophia

Sophia intreated to be informed of the particulars of what had befallen Lady Caroline.

“ She has been ensnared by the basest arts,” replied Lady Susan. “ Montolieu was detected in her chamber this morning ; nor can there be any doubt of their guilt.”

Miss Glanville wrung her hands, and wept with all the bitterness of heartfelt woe. “ O rash, violent, imprudent yet persecuted Caroline ! How will you support, not merely the *consciousness* but also the *shame* of guilt ; with your keen sense of contempt, your high regard for virtue, your proud disdain of even the slightest reproach ! Dear Lady Susan, she never will survive this dire catastrophe. Let me hasten to her, and try at least to prevent the sudden effects of despair.”

“ I must,” replied Lady Susan, “ check this very amiable flow of tenderness, by
M 3 suggest-

suggesting the opinion of the world. You are too young, and too little established in life, to brave its censures. Your reported connexion with Montolieu will increase the impropriety; and you will be suspected by the more discerning of swerving into the absurd philanthropy of the German school, which requires that virtue should not only *pity* but *countenance* vice. My years will give me a privilege which you cannot yet assume; and you must depute me as your representative to Lady Caroline. We were but slightly acquainted, but that now is of little consequence. She shall have an asylum in my house till her affairs can be placed in some train, and you shall see her there."

Miss Glanville's impatience to dispatch a comforter to the forlorn miserable Caroline induced her to hasten Lady Susan's departure; but that lady recollected, that unless she went armed with
some

some degree of authority, her proposed mediation might be totally ineffectual; and she suggested the propriety of requesting Lord Glanville's permission to use his name, on this melancholy occasion. As nothing could be done with him till he awakened out of his dose, the ladies waited in painful suspense for permission to speak with him.

Lady Susan employed this period in relating what particulars were accurately known of this dreadful affair. "I suspect," said she, "that Raymond's part has been most infamous. He has not even attended to the proper precaution of *concealing* his designs; for it has long been generally known, that he more than connived at Montolieu's very public advances to his wife. Lady Caroline looked most beautifully in the play, and supported her (suffer me to say) very ill-chosen character with great spirit, though with a degree of hurry and im-

petuosity approaching to wildness. This style of acting, her hysterical laughs, and the turbulent rolling of her eyes, too plainly indicated the perturbed state of her mind, and made me apprehensive that she never would get through her part. She was alternately pitied for her misfortunes, and condemned for affecting such an unnecessary bravado; and the general effect of a performance so similar to real life, tended rather to depress than exhilarate the spirits of an audience to whom her story was but too well known. She, however, continued to support herself till the close of the fifth act; when the scene of parting with Sullen vanquished her mock magnanimity, and, after a violent effort to laugh which I shall never forget, her features became convulsed, and she sunk upon the stage. Every body was distressed, the curtain dropped, and soon after Lord Harewood came forward and
in-

informed us that Lady Caroline was much recovered, but not able to appear in the entertainment. I own that I looked very anxiously at Montolieu in the farce ; his part was very short, and I observed with pain that he was not at the supper or the ball.

“ I found,” continued Lady Susan, “ that Lady Caroline returned home with only her own servants ; and I learned with pleasure that she was perfectly composed when she set out, though much exhausted. I can tell you no more than what I have already related. Raymond gives the story the utmost publicity, and affects the distress of a fond injured husband ; but the colouring is over-charged.”

Lady Susan was now summoned to attend the earl ; but she soon returned, with horror and indignation strongly painted on her face. “ Your grandfather, my dear Miss Glanville,” said

she, “ requires *your* presence. Your task will be almost as painful as mine ; but I trust that Providence will support us *both* while we discharge the various duties of compassion.”

“ Assure poor Caroline that I will not desert her,” was all that Sophia could articulate, as she hastened to Lord Glanville. She found him in a wild paroxysm of rage, cursing his daughter, execrating all the world as accomplices in her guilt ; and, as usual, endeavouring to disguise the bitter consciousness of his own culpable behaviour under the false pretext of self-gratulation.

“ Base, ungrateful, despicable girl ! Degenerate—no, not degenerate—she was none of mine : I had cast her off, cut her like a withered branch from my honourable stem. And that Montolieu ; cold, artful, villain ! But thus has my noble nature ever been imposed on ! Nothing has prospered since the crafty priest

priest surreptitiously imposed his beggar's brat upon me as the heiress of my fortunes! 'Twas the amorous incitements of her baby face that drew a horde of titled adventurers round me; and I, little practised in their deep iniquity, became a ready dupe.—Off, girl—none of your spaniel fawning.—How durst you offer to take any hand? Are not you the origin of all my misfortunes? What dumb!——Was not Montolieu your lover? Dumb still! Did not you pretend to me that he made honourable offers? Cannot you answer that? At least you will own that you said so to blind my eyes, while he seduced my daughter. No, not my daughter; Caroline Lewson's girl. The disgrace has all fallen on *that* family; for I foresaw it, and have escaped reproach. But you, poor, puling hypocrite, with pretended meekness and real disobedience, you

must explore her haunts, and hug her to your heart. Have you not had enough of friends and lovers now? A butcher, an adulterer, and a strumpet? A goodly groupe! Go, ask pious Brudenell how he likes the trio."

Exhausted by rage, Lord Glanville sunk back in his chair; and Sophia drew the weeping Jervais aside to ask what reception Lady Susan's application had experienced. She found that it had only been answered by imprecations, and unfounded accusations of the innocent. Such, indeed, is the usual imbecility with which a mind destitute of true self-esteem and religious confidence meets severe calamity.

Lady Susan did not return to Portland-place till a late hour. "You must," said she to Sophia, "prepare yourself for a very severe trial. Lady Caroline wishes to see you. She is safe,

my dear Miss Glanville, and at my house."

"In what state of mind?" inquired Sophia, who now felt her heart sink at the idea of an interview for which she had before been so impatient. "In the most unhappy," returned the benevolent Lady Susan. My woman is with her—we have taken every precaution; but I feel a kind of childish terror: My nerves are shaken, I believe."

"Does she meditate self-destruction?" said Sophia shuddering.

"She talks in a distracted manner," replied Lady Susan; "but perhaps you can soften her present horrors. She loves you, I perceive, most tenderly. Let us hasten to her, dear Miss Glanville. If we do not succeed in composing her, she will not need adventitious means to hasten her passage to eternity; her emotions are so dreadfully violent."

Sophia

Sophia had nearly reached the carriage when she was accosted by Jervais. "One word, dear madam: If the earl should inquire for you, where must I say you are gone?"

"Speak the truth, Jervais; to comfort the most miserable of women."

"You mean poor Lady Caroline, madam," continued Jervais, bursting into tears. "May heaven bless your goodness! What a sweet baby she was! My poor lady doated on her and never let her be out of her sight. When she even walked across the room her eyes were on her. Ah, what a loss had she in her poor mother!"

"Jervais," said Miss Glanville, pressing the old man's hand with that benign affability which spoke that this burst of affection was more welcome to her than a thousand compliments: "I will tell poor Lady Caroline that your honest heart laments her disgrace."

"It

“It never would have happened,” resumed Jervais, “had my lady lived. She was sadly neglected, poor young creature, and left to those heathenish foreigners. I once tried to teach her the catechism, but my lord forbade me, and he burnt my lady’s bible, because my young lady was fond of it. If she had been better used, she would have been as good as you are.”

“True!” replied Sophia; “and trust me, Jervais, I will be very firm in my efforts to restore her to peace and hope. Even your lord’s frowns shall not intimidate me from fulfilling what I feel to be a superior duty.”

Jervais bowed his acknowledgments and withdrew. Miss Glanville communed with her own heart as they drove to Lady Susan’s, a heart filled with that grateful humility which characterizes true piety.

“How

“How different,” said she to herself, “are my present prospects from those of the wretched Caroline! Yet, as Jervais has taught me to reflect, in what am I naturally her superior? My faults were corrected by early discipline; hers were fostered by false indulgence. I was taught the useful lessons of human weakness and divine grace, of the origin, duties and destination of man: She entered on the world ignorant of the attributes of its author, and with false views of its inhabitants. I believe that I am an accountable being, called into existence for the purpose of cultivating my nobler faculties during a short term of years, that I may reap the harvest of my toils in the futurity that *perfects* my nature; Caroline thought herself an independent being, accountable to no one but herself for her conduct, and supposed that she fulfilled the laws of her Creator when she yielded to the impetus of her passions,
and

and heightened self-esteem to arrogance. In talent, in native generosity, she far exceeds me ; how then have I escaped those miseries which have shipwrecked all her hopes ? Not surely by my own discernment ; for, should I have avoided error if I had heard it dignified by the name of virtue ? Not by my own fortitude ; for she was distinguished by that determined courage in which I am deficient. The wisdom of my early instructors, and the strength of him who promises not to desert the meanest creature who implores his succour, have been my protection. Let me not then so far abandon my mind to the contemplation of Caroline's misery as to forget the blessings which I myself possess ; nor so far condemn her errors, as not to acknowledge that I might have been as frail." A pious ejaculation concluded this reverie, intreating that she might so act on this awful occasion, as neither to countenance

tenance vice, overwhelm affliction, extinguish hope, enfeeble penitence, nor cherish presumption.

It may be supposed, that when Miss Glanville had strengthened her own mind, and regulated her behaviour by these suggestions, no look of conscious superiority, no proud aggression of vindictory virtue would be visible in her manner or aspect. Yet, when the fallen Caroline heard her step, forgetting all that innate dignity with which she once “moved a goddess and looked a queen,” struck by a sudden impulse of shame, she dropped upon her knees, as her gentle friend approached; and, though her loose tresses partly hid her blushing face, she farther concealed it with her hands.

The scene was awful. A silence of some moments ensued, only interrupted by groans and sighs; for Sophia, unable to advance when she saw Caroline’s affecting posture, clung to Lady Susan’s arm.

arm in terrified distress, and gazed on the interesting ruin with the most heartfelt anguish.

“Dear undone Caroline!” Miss Glanville at length articulated, and bent to clasp her in her compassionate arms; but Lady Caroline, starting up, threw back her hair, and with a petrifying wildness of look exclaimed, “I want not your pity, Miss Glanville! begone.”

“Oh, Caroline,” said Sophia, in her turn sinking on her knees, “then pity me, and suffer me to *comfort* you.”

This appeal to the feelings of a heart bursting with violent emotions was successful. Lady Caroline rushed into her friend’s embrace, and bathed her cheek with a shower of tears. “This,” said she, “indeed is luxury. I have not wept since—— I know not when I have wept; never since the last being who loved me died.”

Lady

Lady Caroline had ever been accustomed to express the tenderest affection for her mother's memory ; and Sophia determined to understand the above suggestion as relating to the deceased countess. " You have always loved and regretted your mother," said she ; " and indeed you had great cause to weep her death."

" I will endeavour to supply her place," said the good Lady Susan, delighted to behold the fierce transports of rage and despair yield to the lenient influence of softer passions. " I will give you that countenance, that assistance, which Lady Glanville if she had lived, would now have afforded you."

" She would have afforded me no countenance, no assistance !" exclaimed Lady Caroline, raising her head from Sophia's bosom. " 'Tis plain you knew not my mother. She was as rigid as yourself, Lady Susan. The very soul of
honour ;

honour ; her character was calumniated, but she was spotless. You thought her, perhaps, such a one as——” she paused a moment ; and, after a sigh which almost seemed to burst the heart it heaved, she added, “ ’Tis well my mother is dead.”

“ We know not,” said Lady Susan, attempting to restrain Caroline’s withdrawing hand, “ how much sorrow we can endure ; but this we do know, that we are all imperfect creatures, and owe mutual tenderness and assistance to mutual weaknesses and wants.”

“ True,” cried Lady Caroline ; “ I do believe that we are all imperfect creatures.”—“ Most assuredly,” added Sophia. “ How is it possible for a person to doubt that truth, who revolves only what passes in her own mind ?”

“ The high resolve,” continued Caroline, rolling her eyes in the wildest frenzy, “ dies in the performance. Truth and honour may still live in the heart ;
but

but credulity, that bane of woman——
Yet if he marries me all will be well.
Sophia, will you resign him?"

"My dearest Caroline, let us not talk of this subject now."

"Now, now, now," ran on Lady Caroline; "now, or never!"

"I have no claims, no pretensions——"

"Mark, Lady Susan. Do you witness that she has no claims, no pretensions. Set that down. I have no father now—you are to be my mother, you know. Oh, 'twill all be right still! If my brain (pressing her head hard with her hands) will but hold——"

"We will not talk more now," said Miss Glanville, alarmed at these presages of madness; "nor *shall* you. You shall lie down, and try to sleep."

"To sleep," reiterated the conscious frail one: "When—Where?"

“ A few moments only. Close your eyes : I will watch by you.”

“ Never, never, never, never,” a hundred times re-echoed, or rather screamed the distracted lady, as she rent her hair, and seemed retreating from some offered violence. “ Never, never,” continued she in a still louder tone ; “ never sleep again.”

The distress of Miss Glanville now became extreme. “ Irreparably lost !” said she to Lady Susan : “ Her reason is totally gone.”

“ I feared that it would,” returned Lady Susan, as she drew Sophia to the door. “ Let us leave her. Our presence seems to irritate her ; silence is best, my servants will be watchful and attentive. I will not, my dear young friend,” continued the good lady, “ blame the violence of your sorrow. My sensibility has been deadened by many afflictions ; but I feel it difficult to
command

command myself at this scene of deep irremediable woe. The sufferer has been so cruelly treated, that we must forget she is culpable."

"Can you tell me how Raymond behaves?"

"With the basest inhumanity. He affected the mockery of grief while he talked with me. He held a handkerchief at his face, but I saw that he did not shed tears. He disgusted me by a ridiculous parade about the keen feelings of wounded honour."

"He feel! he pretend to honour! He is a villain!" exclaimed the indignant Sophia.

"You characterize him justly. Grief in him is impious mockery. I find that her woman is an artful wretch, who first betrayed her lady into Raymond's power, and has now seconded his still more diabolical designs. Lady Caroline returned from Kensington in the deepest
dejection

dejection of mind, ashamed of the sensibility which in reality did her honour, yet determined to fulfil, next morning, a plan which you had recommended to her. At a very late and highly improper hour, Montolieu was introduced into the house: it is believed not without Raymond's concurrence; but I do hope without Lady Caroline's knowledge; at least I was assured by the house-keeper, who seems a truly respectable woman, that her lady sent word down that she was too ill to see him, and refused to permit him to come up to her dressing-room."

"Surely then," said Miss Glanville, clasping her hands, "she has rather been betrayed than criminal."

"We will not be too sanguine," resumed Lady Susan. "Suffer me to go on with my dreadful narrative. The seducer's pretence was, that he originally designed to stop all night at Lord Hare-

woods; but that, as anxiety for Lady Caroline's health had led him to town, he must, on account of the lateness of the hour, request a bed at Raymond's house, being unwilling to disturb his own family. You will observe here, that the master was *conveniently* absent; the servants were not void of suspicion, but afraid to offend a nobleman of such high rank, and one who was received on the footing of a family friend. The housekeeper acknowledges, that she sat up uneasy, yet scarcely knowing why. After it was supposed that the whole house was asleep, she saw Chenille light Montolieu along the passage that led to Lady Caroline's room. She heard a loud talking, distinguished her lady's voice and the marquis's; and plainly heard the latter say, 'If you will confide in my honour, by all that is dear and sacred I will fulfil my oath.' She once determined to open the door, and excuse

cuse herself by saying that she feared her lady was unwell ; but while she hesitated, through fear of offending, Chenille came up stairs, and said many impertinent things. She went back to her own room, and sat (to use her own words) in a deep study, till she heard her master's voice storming with rage. This, she said, did not *surprize her*, though she believes it did Montolieu ; for, after the gentlemen came down stairs, she heard the latter say, ‘ Raymond, ’tis you that are a villain ; this is an absolute breach of contract.’”

“ What must I conclude ?” exclaimed Miss Glanville. “ My mind is bewildered : I know not what to think.”

“ According to present appearances,” returned Lady Susan, “ your friend seems to have been betrayed into the most perilous situation, partly through her own extreme imprudence and partly through the dark machinations of those around her. There is too much reason to con-

clude that she was criminally weak ; and, doubtless, Montolieu prevailed by his solemn assurances that he would marry her immediately on her divorce : a promise which I am persuaded he never meant to fulfil, even at the time he gave it ; for 'tis too apparent that there was some previous stipulation between him and Raymond, that there should be no *discovery* ; which promise the latter, like a thorough-paced villain, has broken. I gather this, not only from the house-keeper's account, but from other circumstances."

" I will not be diffuse, dear Miss Glanville," continued her ladyship ; " but it is necessary that you should know all. I have acquainted you with Raymond's affectation. I told him that I came to take Lady Caroline under my protection till matters could be arranged ; and pleaded that I had *your* authority, as acting for Lord Glanville, who was incapable of giving consistent directions. I

was

was very good, he said; you were most exemplary; and he attempted to shed some crocodile tears, lamenting that he should live to see the day when his once dearest Caroline must be dismissed from his dwelling. I requested that the housekeeper, whom I had before conversed with, might attend her mistress; this he refused, and by naming Chenille strengthened all my suspicions. You may be sure I objected to that worthless creature. Can you believe me? He had the meanness to insist upon retaining the poor lady's jewels. I confess, I do wonder that Lady Caroline, who seemed, when her passions were not concerned, a woman of very fine sense, could ever have been duped by such a common character. But what shall we say for the infatuation of love?"

"She never loved him," answered Miss Glanville, "I am confident: pride, pique, and duplicity, threw her into his
N 3 power.

power. Her heart was then free. I have lately suspected it to be engaged; and if Montolieu would be just——”

“You would say, she might live decently, with half a character, and half content in a *certain* set. But, Miss Glanville, Montolieu *will not be just*. She is not the first woman of rank who has claims upon his honour. It was not through female credulity, or tattling impertinence, that I cautioned you against this specious versatile nobleman. I rejoice that you did not *want* those cautions, and I anticipate with sincerest pleasure your happier fate.”

Sophia blushed, and for *one* instant withdrew her thoughts from Caroline's sorrows; but, soon recurring to the mournful tale, she asked Lady Susan in what state she found her.

“She had,” answered Lady Susan, “an air of bravado in her countenance when we first met, which offended me
exceed-

exceedingly ; but it disappeared the moment I announced the purpose of my visit. I perceived she had flattered herself that I did not know her story ; and I lament to say, that public shame seemed to give her a more severe pang than conscious guilt. I could pity *her*, Miss Glanville, and indeed I did from my soul ; but I could not palliate her seducer's crimes. I spoke of *him* as I felt. But on my mentioning his desertion of Lord Brereton's daughter, who married Captain Waters, her self-command entirely forsook her. She eagerly asked, if Mrs. Waters was handsome, accomplished, fit to adorn a distinguished rank. I answered in the affirmative to the former questions ; but added, that in England a *divorced* lady, however high her rank, was always marked by some degree of avoidance. This, I own, was severe ; but her former impenetrability had displeased me. Her distress now exceeded

all that I can describe. This paroxysm of despair was succeeded by a moody silence, since which she has not been quite rational. She had before consented to put herself into my care, and expressed a marked disgust at her woman. Most assuredly Sir Ralph will not permit Montolieu to visit her here, unless he gives most unquestionable testimony that he will make her all the reparation *now* in his power. It is possible, that if Lord Glanville interfered in a very *strong* manner he might do this; but, I own, I think it *barely* possible. I have just heard that Montolieu is gone into the country, and has left the victim of his baseness to struggle with the severe distress in which he has plunged her."

"Lord Glanville never will interfere," returned Sophia. "As the unhappy Caroline pathetically observed, she has no father. But, perhaps, my mediation might produce some effect."

"What

“What can you mean, Miss Glanville? You surely cannot propose to enter into any treaty with Lord Montolieu.”

“Pardon me, Lady Susan: if my poor friend should be collected to-morrow, I will endeavour to discover her wishes; and then, before I take any decided step, I will consult your judgment, how far I may with propriety attempt to gratify them. You think that she would never be well received in society, even if she became marchioness of Montolieu.”

“Most assuredly women of the first respectability would decline her acquaintance. It is an eminently proper, though I am told a peculiar trait in the character of British ladies, to distinguish between a *tarnished* and an *unspotted* reputation, even when the stains on the former seem to have been washed away by the tears of true contrition. We judge nothing so suitable for a penitent

as a retired life, and *domestic respectability*."

"It is just," replied Miss Glanville. "My tenderness for Caroline made me wish it could be otherwise in this peculiar instance ; but general laws must not bend to particular circumstances ; and I see that a flood of immorality would rush in if they were relaxed. Indeed, true contrition will only wish to be retired and domestic ; for the applause of the million must be offensive to one who has been the dupe of self-confidence and flattery. If Caroline can be taught repentance, her peace of mind will not depend upon her becoming a marchioness ; and, unless her sentiments greatly change, she must, as a *secluded neglected* marchioness, only expect misery. Perhaps, therefore, my scheme would have been romantic, and rather a source of distress than of comfort to her whom I wished to console."

"May

“ May I be favoured with your confidence,” said Lady Susan, “ and permitted to give my opinion before you consult Lady Caroline, whose judgment must be too much perturbed to be depended upon ?”

“ She has a sister’s claim on the Glanville estate,” answered Sophia, modestly concealing her intended generosity under the plea of prescription. “ The earl chooses to deny this ; but, perhaps, if Lord Montolieu knew that she was still a very great fortune——”

“ He might be *bribed*,” said Lady Susan, perceiving that Sophia hesitated, “ to bind this unfortunate victim of his artifices to the long protracted misery of a union with a second husband, almost as despicable, and quite as abhorrent of the marriage yoke, as her first. Would you, my dear Miss Glanville, compel a mind that cannot bear even your pity, to endure the silent contempt,

or perhaps actual insults, of the person who degraded her? What numberless distresses do very worthy people often cause by injudicious interference! Can you forget that Montolieu solicited you for his wife, at the very time when he was corrupting the virtue of Lady Caroline?"

"No, I have not forgotten it. Advise me, Lady Susan. What shall I do?"

"Nothing with Lord Montolieu: Leave him to his own reflections. If he feel as he ought, he will act justly by this unhappy lady, and terminate his career of guilt; and then, if her mind can be brought into a proper state, she may enjoy some faint gleams of sunshine. Let us direct all our attention to her. You know her temper, and you shall visit her by yourself to-morrow.—One more hint before we part. May not the possession of this very great fortune,
of

of which I suspect you are the sole trustee, contribute more to her *real* satisfaction in a single than in a married state? Suppose you were to project a scheme of elegant retirement; turn her attention from *expensive* to *beneficial* pleasures; persuade her to be the Lady Bountiful of a large district; and, if you cannot cure her love of distinction, direct it into the new channel of active charity. At least endeavour to shew her what Montolieu *really* is, before you call upon her to decide."

Miss Glanville thanked Lady Susan for her kind suggestions: and they reluctantly separated at a late hour; after having been informed, that Lady Caroline, exhausted by the violence of her passions, had sunk into a slumber.

CHAP. XXX.

The mournful Muse — draws the Grecian Painter's Veil, the vast Distress to hide.

THOUGH hypocrisy and artifice continued to be Lord Glanville's ruling characteristics ; yet his enfeebled mind, worn by the constant harass of guilt and discontent, and destitute of that pious fortitude which endows declining life with composure, while the clay-built tenement moulders away, had been long unable to support that uniform suavity of manner on which he had formerly founded his pretensions to the character of a complete gentleman. He had lately given way to violent starts of passion, not only

ly with those whom nobody minds being rude to, but on occasions where a smooth polish would have had a better *effect*. Peevishness and passion always gather force from indulgence; and Lord Glanville's irritability, heightened by real distress, bereft of those poor subterfuges by which he had affected to supply the want of real self-esteem, and deserted by the applause of those who make it a rule never to flatter when flattery bears a low premium, now rose to those bursts of extravagance by which childish imbecility hopes to acquire importance. He drove his attendants from him with feeble violence, and his terrifying fits of passion were only interrupted by those stupors which indicate great bodily decay.

Leaving this once formidable man, as contemptible in distress as he had been dangerous in prosperity, to the care of Jervais, Sophia was hastening to the
equally

equally miserable Caroline, when her kind intentions were suspended by the appearance of Lady FitzJohn; who came, by her own account, to shew, that the equanimity of her mind was not only superior to the shocks of fortune, but equal to the task of consoling others. On the news of Sir Peter's failure, she had taken care to equip herself in a dark gown, plain coiff, close bonnet, and square shawl, an exact transcript of the Sunday array of her notable mother as to form, but most costly in price. Knitting being esteemed an appropriate work for a decayed gentlewoman, she began a pair of silk garters, and placed herself on a sofa in Sir Bronze's drawing-room, ready to receive the visits of condoling friends, and to exhibit a portrait of *suffering magnanimity*.

As none of those friends arrived, I will suppose that there might be some
mistake

mistake in the delivery of the messages ; and that, instead of running in the proposed style, of “ Lady FitzJohn does not go out,” they might be changed into “ Lady FitzJohn is not at home.” After sitting in state some days without any visitor, her ladyship began to be weary of suffering magnanimity ; especially as Sir Bronze had set off to the second spring meeting at Newmarket ; and the servants, who were all on board-wages, began to employ themselves in packing up, and other melancholy prefaces of a change of residence. At last Betty announced the dire intelligence, that they must be gone by Saturday ; for the house, being only taken by the week, would then be occupied by another tenant. The white cottage with green pallisades was not yet ready ; no rumours were in circulation respecting any man of fashion who had lately disappeared with the charming daughter
of

of a great mercantile defaulter ; and Lady FitzJohn, trembling with fear lest her future son-in-law should prove to be nobody, began to endeavour to reconcile her mind to Mrs. Morgan's two pair of stairs bed-chamber, when her faithful Betty accosted her with, " Thanks be praised ! your ladyship is not the only *miserable* person in the world. There is Lady Caroline Glanville, who used to be so proud, and laughed at miss, and your ladyship, and Sir Peter ——"

" No, Betty : you are quite wrong there. I am all meekness, child, or such mistakes might provoke me. She *did* laugh at Sir Peter to be sure ; but she was *partial* to me, and quite *fond* of Melisandriana.—Pray what of her ?"

" Only she has run away again. Only think what a shame ! I should think doing so once quite sufficient. But she is now gone with a marquis that has an outlandish name."

" Was

“ Was it Montolieu ?”

“ Yes, madam ; and the old earl has been in fits ever since, and Miss Glanville is gone raging mad.”

“ Poor unfortunate family ! But really they were so proud, and they took it upon them in such a style, that they required humbling. However, as one should always forget people’s faults when they are in trouble, and as they must want a *sensible* person with them to give orders, and answer inquiries ; do you, Betty, pack up immediately : for I will stop with the Glanvilles, out of humanity, till I can make them a little comfortable. The family certainly has some claims upon my friendship.”

I cannot say, that the appearance of this *sensible* friend tended to tranquillize Sophia’s mind. Alarmed at the formidable battalion of trunks and band-boxes which were already intrenched in the great hall, she advanced to meet her

guest with an air of blank dismay that heightened her previous melancholy. "I am very forrow for you indeed," said Lady FitzJohn, also advancing with one arm kemboed, and the other extended; this being in her own opinion the proper position for a true Spartan dame, when in the act of dignified resignation. "Take those boxes to *my* apartment," continued her ladyship, "and the trunks to *my* woman's. Indeed, Miss Glanville, I pity your youth and inexperience; but you must not abandon yourself to useless grief. I am come to comfort and advise you. It is only common people who give way to distress, and the world never minds those sort of characters. Look at me, and learn how to support yourself. I have brought both my appearance and my mind to my fortunes, for I am now only a bankrupt's lady. Sir Peter is off! ruined half a county: but see how composed

composed I am ; for grief, you know, is useless, and I really feel like a rock. Melisandriana has set off for Scotland with some unknown man of fashion : could I help it? I gave her an excellent education, set her the best of examples ; and if she would be so imprudent, it is nothing to me. Artremidorus is gone into Wales to live cheap. Many gentlemen have found it convenient to consult œconomy ; and all the world must own that Artremidorus is a gentleman. What are your troubles to mine, my dear ? I dare say, if you were in my case you would be quite distracted ; but I have such resources in myself, that I can not only abstract my mind from my own cares, but devote my whole faculties to your tribulation. But we will walk up stairs, if you please ; I have a vast deal to say to you."

" You must excuse me this morning," replied Miss Glanville. " I really

am going out upon some business that *cannot* be postponed."

"I will wait your return," resumed her ladyship. "We are such old friends, that we need not stand upon ceremony. Don't let me be the least restraint upon you: I can knit and moralize while you are absent."

"I should be sorry to detain your ladyship: I may not be back till evening."

"Oh, that is of no consequence: I am fond of solitude; never less alone than when alone. I know, too, the melancholy confusion of the family, and will make the most candid allowances. A boiled chicken in my own apartment would satisfy me; the most moderate creature in the world: and, good Mrs. Brown, or whatever is your name, (to the housekeeper, who now made her appearance,) I beg as a favour that you will not take the trouble of sending up an

an elegant dessert. Give all your attention to my lord : I pity his sad state. Do his fits continue ?”

“ My lord has had no fits, Madam.”

“ Glad of it with all my heart. But poor Miss Glanville is terribly overcome. Such a young creature ought not to be by herself in her present trial ; I have the greatest affection for Miss Glanville, a sweet unassuming girl. I am an experienced person, Mrs. Brown, versed in calamity and ——”

By this time Lady FitzJohn and Mrs. Brown were out of hearing ; and Sophia, who could not long feel angry or perplexed by impertinences when she was deeply penetrated by distress, proceeded to Lady Susan Wilson’s.

She heard with pleasure that Lady Caroline was rational. Her mind seemed subdued to a sort of fixed melancholy, scarcely less distressful to the beholder, though perhaps less terrifying, than her
former

former wild despair. She had just been prevailed upon to take some slight nourishment, and appeared busily employed in writing,—it was supposed, to Lord Montolieu.

She raised her eyes when Miss Glanville entered the room, and her frenzy seemed to return. “Have you any expectation of marrying Montolieu?” said she. “I will not be trifled with, Sophia. Give me a frank immediate answer.”

“I certainly have not : what are you going to do?”

“Claim his promises,” replied Lady Caroline with impatient quickness, as she added some words to the bottom of the letter.

“When do you propose sending this?” said Miss Glanville.

“When he next calls.”

“He has never yet called,” returned Sophia.

Lady

Lady Caroline trembled. "I will send it then this moment, and wait here for an answer before I set out."

"Where do you propose to go?"

"Perhaps a long journey." Lady Caroline paused a moment, and asked with a faint smile if it were not a long journey to Glamorganshire.

"It is; but you do not now purpose to go there."

"Nothing but falsehood. Will Brudenell too forsake me?"

"No, most assuredly he never will. But is not the protection of a *woman* of unblemished character at this particular time preferable——"

"Sophia," resumed the fallen fair one with a fixed look, "I cannot live to be a gaze of fools: I have told Montolieu that I cannot. Read what I have said to him."

Miss Glanville read as follows, while Lady Caroline interrupted her with comments on each paragraph.

“ I claim the performance of those solemn engagements which you contracted under the revered, and to me sacred names of honour and generosity. I call upon you to remove me to a station more elevated and honourable than that which I quit for your sake. I bid you wipe off my disgrace, and tell the world that I am not a mere wanton; but one who could dare to take a noble revenge on a mean despot, by breaking those ill-sorted fetters which prejudice alone could think indissoluble. You promised to make me the envy and admiration of my sex. You assured me that I should feel the noble consciousness of having acted as I ought. Fulfil these promises, Montolieu; accomplish these predictions. I would not rashly think you a deceiver; yet

yet detraction is busy with your fame. Can any one else have sacrificed what I have sacrificed for you? Has any one purchased the right of being yours at so dear a price? Has your faith, indeed, been plighted to others? Am I the chosen of your heart, or only one of a miserable train of deluded and abandoned women? Was your love to me the chaste affection of preference, or only the casual wavering inclination of loose desire? Tell me the meaning of your words when Raymond rushed into my chamber. What contract *with him* could you allude to? But can your affection, your gratitude, your honour, be questionable? I will only add, Sophia Glanville confirms the truth of what you told me."

"Yes," said Lady Caroline, running her finger along the letter, "truth and generosity are to me more sacred ties

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than

than *legal* obligation ; and these were his words : ‘ Would you conceal those accomplishments, those charms from the world, when they would cast splendor on *my* coronet ? Envy—admiration—ill-devised fetters—noble consciousness’—all his very expressions ; he must remember them. It must do—this letter must succeed.—‘ Chaste affection of preference.’ None of his paramours could pretend to that. They were weak, vain, and wanton. I gave *him* my whole heart. So he defined his own passion the very day he first confessed it, and lamented that he never saw me before I became the wife of Raymond. The tie of affection constitutes the difference between the prostitute and the pure in soul. United by that bond, though illiberality may censure, yet minds of real magnanimity—yours, for instance, Sophia ——”

Miss

Miss Glanville withdrew her eyes from Lady Caroline's inquiring glances, and was silent.

"You have strong prejudices," said Lady Caroline, snatching her friend's hand; "but consider my situation."

"I have considered it."

"And do you not acquit me?"

"Have you acquitted yourself?—I mean not, Caroline, to increase your anguish: but false glosses will not conceal your fault; nor will excessive tenderness direct you to the means of restoring you peace of mind. But tell me, what do you mean by my vindicating Lord Montolieu's veracity?"

Lady Caroline hesitated, with the apprehensive terror of one who fears to have a favourite hope defeated; and then asked, if Montolieu really had *solicited* her hand, or if it were a favour *pressed* on him by Lord Glanville, which he endeavoured to *decline*.

“ I cannot,” said Miss Glanville, “ be vain of the preference of a lover whom I have refused ; but I ought to give you a frank unequivocal answer. The first proposal came from the marquis. Lord Glanville accepted it ; but, beside resisting parental authority, I had to encounter the *urgent solicitations* of a *determined* lover.”

“ Impossible !” exclaimed Lady Caroline. “ You could not be his choice. I know his taste, his peculiar turn of mind. Your retired manners, your very virtues, would be objections. I have read his soul, Sophy. I acquit you of meaning to deceive me ; but you are yourself deceived ! ’Twas all a political scheme, a farce.—Your ignorance of allowable gallantry enabled them to dupe you.”

Miss Glanville remained silent, pitying the infatuation of her friend, who continued to pace the apartment with dis-

disordered steps. At length, suddenly stopping, she adjured Sophia by all her hopes of future happiness to answer one question. "Did the marquis ever propose marriage in an unequivocal manner?"

"He did," returned Sophia with a very solemn look.

"When?"

"The day before I discovered him breakfasting with you."

"And you affirm this on your veracity, your conscience, your religion, your soul's best hopes?"

"I would not lightly stake those hopes. Dear Caroline, I do protest that he has *often* pressed me to consent to an *immediate* marriage."

Lady Caroline snatched up the letter to the marquis, and tore it into fragments. "Gone! gone to the winds!" said she, "like his promises; and with it perish all my hopes and wishes."

“ Surely,” observed Miss Glanville, “ they did not *all* depend upon a traitor’s faith.”

“ I thank you, Sophia,” resumed the unhappy lady, “ for rescuing me from unnecessary degradation. Why, he would have shewn this letter to his assembled wantons, and the whole seraglio would have grinned at my credulity. Oh the deceit, the cruelty, the treachery of man ! I have been twice duped ; but now confidence is no more.”

“ You have friends still left, who never will deceive you.”

“ No ; for they will never try to cheat me with the *decent* affectation of a *cold* esteem. Every favour will bespeak their pity. They will be kind to an unhappy degraded wretch, because they *ought*. They will forgive her the offences that she has committed against the laws of society and female decorum, from the *selfish* motive that they must
not

not else hope to be forgiven. Well, 'tis all right : I knew *this* would be my lot. Such are the contracted habits of mankind ! Such are the prejudices that we are taught to cherish for virtues ! and I will not complain."

" There is a never-failing friend," said Miss Glanville, affectionately clasping Caroline's hand, " whose pity and forgiveness cannot degrade you."

" Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace ;
To his attentive ear thy grief confide ;
His tender care each throbbing pain shall ease ;
His arm sustain thee, and his counsels
guide."

A sublime expression lighted up Sophia's face as she repeated this stanza *. If ever the term angelic be appropriate to female beauty, it must be while such sentiments of rational piety glow in its bosom.

* From Mrs. Carter's Poems.

Lady Caroline mournfully shook her head and replied, "I understand you, Sophia. You have ever been a dutiful subject to the King you serve. You may, therefore, rejoice in the confidence of his favour, and feel soothed and consoled by meditating on his power; but a *rebel* can only look for punishment."

"A repentant rebel may depend upon receiving pardon."

The miserable Caroline faintly answered, "I CANNOT REPENT."

"You soon will, I trust, be capable of repentance. The confusion of your thoughts is now too great for cool reflection; but time will subdue these violent emotions. Calm consideration will succeed. No one can bear to be a wretch for ever. You will look out for motives of consolation; you will not resist conviction; and the more dark and cheerless your temporal prospects, the more attention you will bestow

flow on that never-dying spark which even the cold damp sepulchre and the long night of death cannot extinguish."

"You state possibilities as certainties," said Caroline, shuddering with inward horror. "You forget that many doubt what you assert. But no matter: I mean to be passive. If repentance and piety visit my soul, I will welcome them. My temporal prospects are, I grant, all dark and cheerless. You have proved Montolieu a liar. He who utters a deliberate falsity, which he knows must involve another in ruin, is no common villain. Neither justice nor generosity can live in his heart, and there is only one resource now left me."

"What is that?" tenderly inquired Miss Glanville.

"I would see my father."

"I fear it would not conduce to your comfort at present. He is in a very unhappy state of mind."

“ No matter : he will curse, abuse, and push me from him ; perhaps execrate my mother, and the hour that gave me birth. I have but little to say, and shall not *repeat* my visit. I shall bear it all very well. You will admire the strength of my resolution.”

“ Only say what end you suppose this will answer.”

“ What end ? Oh, that is very clear. I shall contrast the inflexibility of man with the lenity and compassion which you tell me exist in the Author of Nature. You say, that the Eternal wishes to be called our father.—Will you let me go ?”

Miss Glanville consulted Lady Susan, and they agreed to yield to her wishes. They observed, that she might feel more tranquil when under the paternal roof ; and that for some time the earl need not be informed of her being there. Even if she could not be diverted from her
pur-

purpose of seeing him, perhaps the interview might have a happy effect, by reviving the feelings of nature in Lord Glanville's heart ; which event (in spite of the affected disguise that pride assumed) Miss Glanville was convinced would abate the anguish that Lady Caroline suffered.

On returning to her apartment, the ladies found her busy in folding a scrap of paper ; which, as Miss Glanville approached, she thrust into her bosom. " Are you ready to conduct me ?" said she, extending her hand.

" I am. But you will not go thus disordered in your dress. Let me recommend a pellice and a close bonnet."

" No, the effect will be diminished," said Lady Caroline, giving a fanciful arrangement to her long curling hair, which sported in a style of inimitable elegance. " I want to look interesting, like our *favourite* Melisandriana."

" This

“ This cannot be cheerfulness and real inconsideration,” said Miss Glanville thoughtfully, while Lady Caroline passed hastily to the carriage; observing to the servants, that she was now going *home*. Her breath came and went with short intermitting pantings; and her whole frame shook so violently, that Sophia debated whether she should not stop the chariot.

On her arrival at Portland-place, no intreaty of Lady Susan’s or Sophia’s could prevail upon her to relinquish her design of immediately seeing the earl. She declared, with the pertinacity natural to her temper, that she would resist force, and was insensible to persuasion. Bursting from those who attempted to dissuade her, she rushed into the earl’s apartment. “ I must spare you this scene,” said she, shutting the door on Sophia, who followed her with trembling steps. “ By all the tears I have cost you,

you, by all the love you have borne me, do not interrupt us till I call you ! Consider that he is *my own* father ; and may *you* be happy !”

Sophia drew back, almost fainting with apprehension. She caught Caroline’s parting words, and affixed to them some dreadful import. She heard the earl storm in one of his frantic moods ; his passion died away ; and she distinguished Lady Caroline’s speaking in a low tone. Sophia blessed the happy omen :—— all was at once still. A heart-piercing scream ensued, followed by the loud cries of Jervais for instant help.

It was not in Miss Glanville’s power to afford it ; terror deprived her of sense and motion, and she fainted in Lady Susan’s arms ; having just caught the dreadful intelligence, that Lady Caroline had stabbed herself at her father’s feet.

The particulars of this rash and guilty deed were thus supplied by Jervais,

who witnessed the heart-breaking interview.

“ When my young lady rushed into the room, my lord, though before scarcely able to rise out of his chair, attempted to push her back. ‘ You gave me being,’ said she; ‘ I am your child; do not plunge me into utter despair. Will you forgive me?’ continued the poor lady; but she never said, as she ought to have done, ‘ So may heaven forgive you!’ Alas! I fear neither of them ever thought of another world, poor mortal creatures as they were. Then my lord began to abuse her; he even called her a bastard and a strumpet, and swore she would be the death of him. She stood very calm till he was quite choaked with passion. I helped him back to his chair, and held the salts to him, for I verily thought he was dying. Oh, that I had but attended to my dear young lady! She stood and talked for above a minute in such a way——

way—— but she always was the most eloquent creature that ever was born. She said, ‘ You robbed my mother of peace and fame, and you abandon me. You have cut me off from all hope in this world ; and MARK ! if there be an hereafter, my soul will be required of you, whose precepts have misled me ; and my blood be upon you for ever ! ’ I turned round as she spoke those last words ; but it was too late. She had struck with such force, that the knife was plunged up to the hilt in her bosom. I caught her in my arms. Dear soul ! her blood flowed upon the floor like a fountain. She gave one deep groan ; and, turning her dying eyes upon me, said, ‘ Jervais is it you ? Yes,’ she said, ‘ Jervais,’ with a faltering voice ; so ’twas plain she knew me. ‘ Take this paper yourself to Montolieu, and tell him that you saw me die. Like a fool, for I knew not what I was about,

I an-

I answered, ‘My dear lady, he is gone to Scotland.’ I am sure that those words increased her agony. But, thanks be to heaven ! it was not for long. I would not have that to answer for which my lord has, for a thousand worlds.”

The *Infidel Father* was a spectator of this scene. He saw the convulsive struggles of his dying child, perverted by his false principles, and rendered furious by his cruelty. He, who had always flown from every appearance of human calamity, was doomed to take his first view of death in the distorted visage of his only surviving offspring. Too late relenting, he had screamed out forgiveness ; he had wrenched the fatal instrument of death from her now nerveless hand ; he had clasped her bleeding body in his arms, attempted to staunch the wound, conjured her to live, and then found, to his everlasting remorse, that he was addressing

dressng an unconscious corpse. A horrible retrospection of his past life rushed upon his thoughts. An abandoned distracted wife, a murdered kinsman, and a deserted son, all flitted before him. Even Lady Caroline Lewson seemed to join the vindictive groupe, and to expire again in her unhappy child. A few days of unspeakable misery terminated the mortal existence of Lord Glanville.

The death-bed of an Atheist cannot be described. It is a sight from which the human heart recoils with horror. The closing scene of life is always awful, and far unlike that fantastic resemblance which enthusiasm and romance present as a real portrait of nature "languishing into life." Severe and afflictive messengers conduct the frail sons of mortality through the dreary valley which leads to the immaterial world. Elegance, sentiment, and philosophy, rarely remain in the sick chamber, when it becomes
the

the residence of hopeless disease or excruciating misery. Much occurs to humble the pride of man, to correct his fastidious delicacy, and to make him feel, before he enters the narrow house, that the worm is his sister. Sadly convinced that the harp and the viol, censure and praise, admiration and contempt, will soon be to him synonymous, he feels little inclination and less ability to disguise his thoughts, and hang out the showy veil of a fair exterior. Whatever worth then appears must be intrinsic; no loved subterfuge, no cherished disguise, will then find a favourable reception. Even darling passions will lose their force; the preferred amusement will be dismissed without regret; and among all the wide range of studies, delights, occupations, and projects, which agitate the human heart; among all the idolized associates that gild the hours of health and happiness with meretricious splendor,

splendor, and induce forgetfulness of man's chief end and aim, Religion only can endure the rigours of this dolorous season ; and if she be absent, it is indeed tremendous. The chamber of sickness is then, not merely the avenue to death, but also the prototype of hell.

During the painful scenes which succeeded these dreadful occurrences, Miss Glanville experienced many salutary consolations. Her conscience whispered peace ; and while nature sorrowed over the premature end of the friend she loved, and shrunk with horror from the almost demoniacal frenzy of her unhappy grandfather, she felt more strongly confirmed in her own principles, and induced to hold fast the hope of immortality.

Beside the matronly attentions of Lady Susan Wilson, she was supported at this trying period by the presence of her

dearest friend. Mr. Brudenell immediately hastened to the beloved of his soul, fortified her failing strength by his pious wisdom, and guided her conduct by his experience.

The total subversion of the powers of reason which accompanied Lord Glanville's last hours, prevented Mr. Brudenell from offering those consolations which Christianity never refuses to those perishing wretches, who, with sincere though late repentance, endeavour to cling to the rock of faith, while every earthly hope sinks in the ocean of eternity. No lucid interval permitted the still doubting infidel to arrange his perplexed ideas, or to implore mercy from that God whom in his heart he only *half denied*. No pause of anguish allowed him to express repentance for past sin. "The busy meddling fiend" Despair was *stationary* at his couch; and, though the pious Brudenell watched him
with

with all the solicitude of true compassion,
like the guilty Beaufort,

“ He died and gave no sign.”

The remains of the father and the daughter were deposited in the mausoleum, beside the coffin of the late countess. There the injured and the injurer, the withered stem, the blasted branch, and the canker that despoiled them, lie alike concealed from human eyes, and secure from human justice ; but not unmarked by Omniscience. Their deeds will be remembered in the day of final retribution. Judging that the circumstances which attended the last hours of the earl and Lady Caroline would render funeral pomp *peculiarly* unsuitable, the interment was conducted with all possible privacy. “ The curtains were drawn close,” and the parties concerned “ retired to meditation.”

Conscious

Conscious that Sophia's regret for Lady Caroline's death was as unaffected as her horror for her offences, Mr. Brudenell did not attempt to repress its first emotions. He suffered her to bewail her friend's misfortunes; listened to the oft-repeated narrative with complacent sympathy; examined those suggestions of tardy ineffectual prudence, which proposed means whereby the fatal catastrophe might have been prevented if it had been foreseen; and gradually led her docile mind to an acknowledgment, that the *causes* of those sad events originated in early youth, by the introduction of erroneous principles, at first doubtful in their tendency, but developing themselves as the mind ripened, and the passions gained strength; till at last, disclosing all their horrors, they ended in deeds by which those who *denied* Providence, and those who *despised* the restraints

restraints of moral obligation reciprocally punished *each other*.

From these mournful scenes Mr. Brudenell directed his pupil to the contemplation of her own happy prospects. He dwelt, first, on those intrinsic, solid satisfactions which result from a peaceful conscience, from the recollection of pure intentions, from sincerity of heart, integrity of conduct, and ingenuousness of character. All within being as it ought to be, the good pastor pointed to the splendid fortune by which Sophia's virtue would be at once proved and rewarded. Led by these progressive steps, Miss Glanville soon recovered her wonted serenity. She acknowledged, that irremediable grief was never intended to be permanent; that the passive indulgences of sensibility should never supersede the active obligations of duty; and that, as repining pensiveness was useless to man, it must be displeasing to heaven.

The friendship which is founded upon affection and gratitude, without the cement of esteem, or the consecrating principle of religion, will soonest yield to the obliterating hand of time. Miss Glanville's regard for Lady Caroline could not change into that pleasing remembrance, that sweetly cherished woe, which leads love to the grave of departed worth: it was necessarily blended with a melancholy recollection of trials and sorrows not wholly useless, as they inculcated the necessity of constant watchfulness, humble self-possession, and pious gratitude.

No tears were dropped over Lord Glanville's grave. He loved himself too well, and his fellow creatures too little, to be regretted. It was matter of joy to his dependents, tenants, and connexions, that the mighty space he filled would be occupied by a character in all respects *dissimilar*. The virtues

of Miss Glanville, though of a retired domestic cast, had spread her fair fame abroad. It was not yet known, that her benevolence, liberality, and munificence would keep pace with the ample fortune of which she was the sole inheritrix; but it was known, that she was the true offspring and pupil of the good Mr. Brudenell, who promoted the happiness of all around him; not by profuse indiscriminate liberality, which acts from the impulse of the moment; not by that specious beneficence, which artfully courts popularity; not by officious intemperate zeal, that often defeats its own purposes, and introduces more evils than it removes; but by steady, grave, uniform, consistent charity, at once active and modest, averse to blazoning its good deeds to the world, yet never diverted from its course by any misrepresentation or opposition. Alive to human afflictions, but not the prey of sus-

ceptibility; not insensible of the music of honest praise, nor deaf to the exhilarating voice of sincere gratitude; but acting uprightly, humanely, and wisely, by its fellow-creatures at all times and on all occasions, from a constant recollection, that every motive of action was witnessed by an all-seeing Eye, and would be investigated by an all-powerful Judge.

Nor did Miss Glanville's character appear to less advantage when opposed to that of the gay, fascinating, imprudent Lady Caroline. Without adverting to her greater faults, it was recollected, that if Sophia's wit was not so fascinating, her cheerfulness was more exhilarating; if fewer were delighted, most people were pleased, and none offended. Not many of her bon mots were remembered, but no one could repeat her sarcasms; the world talked less of her, but all that it said was to her advantage. Notwithstanding the general corruption which
is

is often ascribed to modern manners, notwithstanding the many instances in which they deviate not only from Christian but from moral rectitude, gentleness, modesty, discretion, and steady propriety, rank high as female virtues; while the more brilliant qualities, when deserted by these hallowed guardians of our sex, are admired and avoided.

CHAP. XXXI.

Poetical Justice is administered in the Conclusion.

WHEN female credulity has been induced to sacrifice innocence, fame, and repose, to gratify the sollicitations of a libertine, the wretched dupe of sentiment and susceptibility generally supposes that she has conferred an *eternal* obligation. Mistaking urgent intreaty for real affection, and selfish impetuosity for true sensibility, the believing fair imagines that she has only to remind her lover of his vows and her own liberality, to bring him to her feet all tenderness and truth. Alas! they mutually traded in false coin; he used the specious bait
which

which too generally allures inexperienced minds, and called iniquity honour, and selfishness affection; and she, while with melting weakness yielding to his caresses, esteemed herself a mirror of generous confidence, for being wanton and vain.

That thirst for praise, that passion for admiration, so serviceable to the designs of the seducer, so destructive to female virtue, were not the only incitements that led Lady Caroline astray. Despising the general maxims of society, she created a sort of world of her own; confounding the nature of vice and virtue, and giving that supremacy to *feeling* which she denied to reason, she was persuaded that she could purchase happiness by a crime that all civilized nations have stigmatized with infamy. Determined by motives which a dispassionate mind would term the dictates of criminal sophistry, hurried by the mad impulse of revenge to place confidence in the *words*

of one whose *actions* spoke a different language, Lady Caroline wilfully sported on the verge of danger, promoted Montolieu's designs against herself with determined blindness, and relied on her own pernicious principles to preserve her from deeds which those principles even encouraged and *justified*.

The moment of Raymond's discovering her guilty commerce with Montolieu was, to her, the moment of terrible conviction. Her paramour's repentment at the husband's intrusion proved, that nothing was really farther from his thoughts than the scheme which he had ostensibly held forth; namely, his desire to free her from an unworthy bondage, and to make her his own wife. She saw with unspeakable agony, that while Montolieu was made the dupe of a willing wittol, she herself was become the tool of both; the merchantable commodity for which they had previously entered

entered into the most iniquitous traffic ; and, instead of a revenger of her own wrongs, a miserable victim to their treachery and the violence of her own passions.

Lady Caroline's pride a little while upheld her, and prevented her from acknowledging the sad certainty which she could not but feel. Reluctantly convinced that Montolieu had never sought her with any farther view than as the companion of his criminal pleasures, she sunk under the humiliating certainty of her own egregious folly. Too imperious to sustain contempt, too stubborn to feel conviction, she determined to quit a world in which she must ever after have borne a degraded character and filled a subordinate station. Accustomed to consider suicide as the noble effort of a superior soul, that was become disgusted with a scene unworthy of its inherent excellence, she had long resolved

to apply to that resource, as soon as life's gay visions palled upon her eye. The last hours of her existence were not devoted to the retrospection of her own faults, but to the revengeful wish of *punishing her enemies*.

Raymond was beneath the resentment of a woman of Lady Caroline's turn of mind. She hated herself for having been deceived by a capacity inferior to her own, and she owned her punishment in that instance just. We have seen her expiring in her father's presence by an act of desperate frenzy; and that unpitied and unpitied father accompanying to the grave.

The following lines, addressed to Montolieu, were intended to excite the most poignant and lasting remorse in his bosom :

“ Again deceived where I placed implicit trust, I loath my nature, I renounce my existence. I have no generous

rous friend who can appreciate the motives by which I acted. They talk to me of repentance, pardon, and peace. Repentance cannot dwell in the breast that is filled with a consciousness of most injurious treatment; pardon I will not solicit; peace I never shall know. A houseless, nameless, destitute being, I will try to waken nature in a father's heart. I am hopeless of success; but I know that I can introduce remorse, and communicate to him a portion of the horrors which I feel.

“ O Montolieu! you my generous disinterested protector! you who could scorn the censures of the world for my sake! you who could defy danger, and despise advantage, to gain me! you—— by what epithet shall I call you? O selfish voluptuary! meanly leagued with a cold-blooded villain for my destruction; howl your fiend-like pæan over the fallen Caroline. I have no other name;

but if you doubt my identity, remember that I am the last woman whom you solicited, ruined, and abandoned to despair !”

Mr. Brudenell’s respect for the memory of the unfortunate lady would have induced him to suppress a letter which breathed a vindictive spirit, wholly incompatible with that universal charity which ought to predominate in the last moments of every sinful offending mortal ; but Jervais, with well-meaning integrity, insisted upon discharging *his* trust. “I promised my dear lady,” said he, “that I would deliver it with my own hands ; and I know it will have a very wonderful effect ; especially when I describe how she looked when she gave it me. It speaks home, sir ; it must touch his conscience. He never will be able to stand against such a charge ; and if it break his heart, the world can very well spare him.”

Jervais

Jervais was admitted into the marquis's presence, delivered the letter with his own hands, and described the lady's dying moments with affectionate earnestness and heart-riving simplicity. Montolieu, though one of the best bred men in England, turned pale, and trembled for a few moments. He, however, soon recovered his polite nonchalance ; treated Jervais with great urbanity ; commended his attachment to his lady's memory ; protested that he had not the smallest idea that the affair would have terminated in such a calamitous way ; and, after declaring his profound esteem and respect for Lady Caroline, he ordered that his establishment should be immediately put in mourning ; and offered Jervais a handsome gratuity, which the latter, though almost persuaded that his lordship was not quite so great a villain as he once thought him, indignantly refused.

Lord

Lord Montolieu has now just doffed his six months fables, and is at this time on the eve of marriage with a young lady of rank, beauty, and fortune, who, though well acquainted with Lady Caroline's history, and willing to own that his lordship behaved wrong in that affair, yet flatters herself with the prospect of connubial felicity. She builds these hopes on very popular grounds: namely, that nobody is without faults; that the catastrophe was more dreadful than he could expect; that he certainly was very sorry, and that he *may* reform. I must add, that the intended bride is only eighteen, is very vain, has a passion for a coronet, and subscribes to the dangerous doctrine, That a reformed rake makes the best husband.

Her fate is easily foreseen; but will the marquis ever be happy? NEVER. Though dissipation and prosperity may
awhile

awhile stifle the voice of conscience, the hours of seclusion, adversity, sickness, and death will arrive; and every Montolieu will as surely become what Glanville *was*, as that the Governor of the universe is irreconcilable to unrepentant sinners.

Of Raymond little need be said. Even vice has its decencies; and there are characters that are too infamous to appear even in the most abandoned circles of fashion. He lives universally despised. His conduct to his wife was too notorious to permit him to demand legal compensation for his wrongs; and when he has squandered what is still left of Lady Caroline's fortune, he will be abandoned even by those very parasites whom he now feeds at his table.

Let me now revert to the situation of my other characters. Supposing that my readers must have undergone a severe disappointment, by my neglecting
to

to introduce Lady FitzJohn in her promised character, I will acknowledge that I have certainly lost a very fair opportunity of repeating all the common place observations by which ordinary comforters endeavour to persuade those who are draining the bitter dregs of woe, that *physic is not bitter*. Lady FitzJohn might certainly have told Sophia, that every body is born to die; that grief will not fetch the dead to life again; that many people are as wicked as Lord Glanville; that it was a great pity they suffered Lady Caroline to go into the room to her father; that she might easily have foreseen that she meant to kill herself; that all might have been prevented; but that, after all, it was of no use talking of these things now. These reflections, with a few hints of her own fortitude under greater trials, narratives of similar cases, and a collection of all the trite aphorisms that
ever

ever were uttered, would have completed the character of a *sympathizing* friend, especially if I had introduced the prudent rule that entails perpetuity on your good offices; for if you do but endeavour to *pin* the mind of the sufferer to his sorrow, by incessantly arguing against feelings that never yet submitted to argument, you have a fair chance of preventing time from preparing that gentle opiate, which seldom fails to hush grief into a happy lethargy.

Preferring Mr. Brudenell's method of wiping away tears, I have stated its effects upon Sophia, before I mentioned the circumstances that induced Lady FitzJohn to forego the office which she had voluntarily assumed. Her ladyship had only time to fix her boxes, lay her knitting on the work-table, adjust her drapery on the sofa, drop her head on one side, and read six pages of "The

Victim of Generosity," when Betty burst into the room with an account of Lady Caroline's tragical exit.

"Amazing! shocking indeed!" said her ladyship. "What very interesting scenes will now take place! There will be the coroner's inquest, and examination, and cross examination; and I shall be called upon to give my evidence. Well, I will collect my mind. Give me my pen and ink, I will compose such a speech as never was heard in *any* court of justice."

"O lud, madam," said the terrified Betty, "must the *crowner* sit on the body? I am sure then I never dare go about the house again. I know they'll bring it in *Fellow d'ye see*; and then she'll have a stake drove through her, and she is sure to walk. Aye, your ladyship may smile; but I am sure every Christian creature that is so buried walks directly, as sure as ever Robinson

son Crusoe walked with Goliath's head, as it says in the picture in our eating-room."

" Betty," returned her ladyship, " your ignorance will make one smile, while one's heart is rived with the tenderest sensibility from the pressure of my *friend* Miss Glanville's sorrows. How often have I told you, that the picture you describe was not Robinson Crusoe and Goliath, but King Rogdrum Logdum and Sir Walter FitzJohn, founder of *our* family; a family, Betty, never disgraced by trade, till Sir Peter, contrary to my advice, embarked his ample fortune in avaricious speculations, and, failing in his monopoly, obscured us in a temporary eclipse."

Her ladyship was proceeding, when Betty, who stood with the door half open, more attentive to what passed below than to her lady, catching some broken sentences, screamed out, " O
madam,

madam, worse and worse! they say the earl has killed his daughter!"

"That is not so genteel an event as suicide," returned Lady FitzJohn. "It has more the air of a banditti story, than an anecdote of people of fashion. The earl must be hanged, and that is very vulgar. Poor man! I guess his motive though. It was all disappointed love, which has a terrible effect upon passionate people; and if I am called upon to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, I must confess that Lady Caroline took infinite pains to break off the earl's connexion with my daughter."

"O dear madam," interrupted Betty, "I am so *frightful* at being in a murderer's house. If he should break loose and kill us too!"

"I am considering," continued her ladyship, after a pause which, being solely devoted to the contemplation of her
her

her own affairs, was unembittered by solicitude or commiseration for the unhappy family, "whether it will be *delicate* for me to stay after this extraordinary incident. The world may think that I stimulated his lordship to revenge; and who knows, considering the peculiar circumstance of my being now under his roof, but I may be committed as an accomplice?"

"Very true indeed," replied Betty, her face lengthening with terrors that increased at every suggestion. "Do let us get away, dear sweet lady; there is no such thing as being safe with such bloody-minded people. I have just caught a glimpse of my old lord; and to be sure no dragon ever looked so terrible."

"I think," said her ladyship, rising with a quicker motion than suited the graceful movements of delicate distress, "if I was to be at Mrs. Morgan's a very
little

little while, till my daughter returns, and my son-in-law presents me with my dear little recluse cottage, I should not contract an indelible *contamination*. Clarissa Harlowe lodged at a glover's; Cecilia was in very mean apartments when Delville found her; even Lady Clementina della Porretta, and her maid Camilla, seemed in an inferior part of the town, till Sir Charles Grandison removed her to Lady L——'s. You may order my lord's chariot, and bring down my boxes. I myself shall walk; for it is fit that I should set an example of humility to all bankrupts' ladies. Or, let me consider; would it not be nobler in me to remain here, defy danger, despise my enemies, and assert my innocence? Suppose they send me to prison; will not my son-in-law fly to set me at liberty?"

"Did not your ladyship know that miss and the captain are come back,"
inquired

inquired Betty, in haste to terminate a string of reflections which she by no means approved. Indeed, her confusion at Lady Caroline's death had till now prevented her from delivering a letter that had just been put into her hands by the two-penny post-man. She now presented it to Lady FitzJohn, who recognized her daughter's writing, and carefully examined the seal, feeling some little diminution of her elegant emotion when, instead of a coronet or other honourable emblem, it only bore the impression of two *flaming* hearts, bound together on the altar of love.

The contents were as follow :

“ Dear mamma !

“ I have had a most delightful journey. The captain is the *charmingest* man in all the world, and I the happiest of all human creatures. I hope you and papa will forgive me ; for indeed

deed I never did like that old *frumpish* lord, nor that odious rude Sir Bronze, nor that drawling simpering Sir Timothy; but the captain is the very thing itself; and if papa will but be so good as to give us a little money, we do not want any thing else; and so, dear mamma, don't be angry; for, you know, happiness is better than riches; and

“ I remain

“ Your dutiful daughter,

“ MELISANDRIANIA JENKINS.”

“ *Jenkins! Jenkins!*” repeated Lady FitzJohn in the most dolorous tone. “ I never heard of such a name. What *Jenkins* can it be?”

“ Captain Jenkins himself, as sure as I am alive!” answered Betty. “ Well I always thought miss liked him, since I caught them walking in the garden last summer. But your ladyship was so sure it would be a lord.”

“ What,

“What, Titus Jenkins, the grocer’s son?” screamed Lady FitzJohn. “The fellow whose mother gave routs in a three-cornered closet, and made her visitors sick with almonds and raisins; the creature who dresses after me in second-hand clothes, and swears she gives as good champagne as the FitzJohns, though I know it was only *home-brewed* perry; and has her booby son, whom she put into the volunteer corps because Artremidorus had a private tutor, run away with my daughter?”

“It is certain sure, madam,” answered Betty, who was deeper in the secret than she chose to acknowledge. “But if poor miss loved him you know;—and they do say the Jenkins’s are as rich as *Crecius*.”

“Indelible disgrace! Look you, Betty, I here vow irreconcilable enmity. Not one favour will I accept from such low, illiterate, *vulgar* people. I detest nothing

so much as your second-hand gentry; my delicacy shrinks from a contact with anniseeds and treacle cakes. Never will I darken their doors. O Melifandriana FitzJohn! you that might have rode in a coronet coach of your own, go mount into your father-in-law's dray, and hawk his perishing oranges. You! beautiful creature as you once were! stand behind the counter, and weigh plumbs and sugar of a market-day. I disown you; I cast you off. Had he but been a person of family, could I but have pleaded his pure blood to my great connexions—Call a hackney coach, Betty; take me any where; never can I shew my face again among people of quality.”

Having thus conducted Lady Fitz-John from *elegant* distress, to *real* chagrin, little more need be said to terminate her history. She continues inflexible in her resentment to the Jenkins's; and, having given up her jointure to the
main-

maintenance of her extravagant son, she is supported by the benevolence of Miss Glanville, whom she obligingly terms so much her friend, that she is even willing to do her the favour of accepting her bounty.

Her ladyship is now, at least in her own estimation, a *bas bleu* of the first distinction. As she conceives that envied appellation to mean, setting cleanliness and decency at defiance, denying all received truths, and disputing every proposition, there are *some* members of the literary world who are not anxious for her acquaintance; notwithstanding that she is a Sappho in poetry, an Artemisia in metaphysics, and a Mrs. Deborah Western in political sagacity.

Her breach with Sir Peter is equally irreconcilable. Added to all his former faults, which indeed a woman of refinement could hardly put up with, his unreasonable honesty in refusing to pro-

mote his daughter's match with Sir Timothy Daw, can never be forgiven. But for that, Melifandriana might have been Lady Daw, and at least a poor *gentlewoman*. I cannot learn, that the incorrigible husband feels her resentment as he ought. Indeed it is whispered, that he neither regrets his lady, nor the name and honours which she procured him. He has even taken advantage of the *alias* in the Gazette; and as his creditors have permitted him to resume business, he intreats that he may carry it on in a little snug way, and be plain *Jones* again; in which capacity his neighbours do say he *seems* happier than he has ever been since he fell in love with the *charming temper* of Miss Catherine Muggleton.

It is also reported, that the happiness of Captain and Mrs. Jenkins is not so perfect as was at first expected. The captain finds that he has not got what
he

he looked for, and is bound to what he did not want. An expensive wife, without a fortune, is a severe tax on limited finances; and the Jenkins's are at present as angry with their new daughter for want of money, as Lady FitzJohn can be with the Captain's want of blood.

Mr. Artremidorus continues in Wales, where he fishes a little, shoots a little, and gets a little tipsey when he is in cash. He sometimes does "*Old Jones*" the kindness to remind him of his existence, by transmitting a few bills for him to discharge; which the frugal father does with a sigh, declaring, that though the law could not make him, nobody shall say that they lose a farthing by any of his family. The decent respectability of his character induces Miss Glanville to invite him frequently to the castle, where he is treated with affability and benevolence, without

any ostentatious condescension. It is upon his account that Sophia has resolved never to be offended by his wife's impertinence; and she has lately procured a commission for young Jenkins in a marching regiment, the heroic youth having declared that he would sooner starve than put on the blue apron again. His *lovely wife* has made a similar protestation against the obsolete character of plain usefulness, and continues remodelling her *diminishing* wardrobe, resolved to be quite in fashion to the last.

I had once determined to make my farewell curtesy at the close of the above paragraph; but all my young friends are unanimous in requesting that I will not leave Miss Glanville in a state of celibacy. In vain do I urge, that such a character as I have described must have numerous admirers, and that I expect
im-

immediately on the publication of my work, that she will be besieged by a host of suitors ; as every gentleman who wishes for a very excellent wife must be ambitious of obtaining her : unless, indeed, her immense wealth should present an obstacle, as Plutus and Cupid have *always* been irreconcilable enemies. I am reminded, that a sort of retiring shyness (they don't call it modesty, or self-abasement) and a kind of easy abstracted languor (not ascribable to very profound learning, or philosophical self-denial) so much prevails among the present race of gallants, that scarcely one in a hundred would be troubled even with such a wife as my Sophia. “ I must marry her,” is the universal cry, or she will continue the female “ phœnix, that *sole* bird.” What most alarms me, however, is, the assurance, that nobody will read my novel if I do not. It

will be called an old maid's story about an old maid; and it will lie upon the shelf covered with dust and cobwebs, together with the Life of St. Agnes, and the Miracles of St. Winifred.

This last denunciation has so far wrought upon my *too* compliable temper, that, notwithstanding my aversion to having the blessed state of singleness slightly spoken of, by a parcel of giggling girls, I have given up my own opinion (which I am not very fond of doing); and before I take off my spectacles I will tell my readers, that I am informed Lord Selborne has returned to England with "all his honours blooming on his head," and with no abatement in his attachment to Miss Glanville. I do not find that she is mortally offended at his having preferred his duty, and the welfare of his country, to the pleasure of languishing at her feet; and I conclude
the

the contrary, as I have been assured that he is a *frequent* and *welcome* guest at Glanville castle.

Mr. Brudenell has pleaded his declining years as an excuse for resigning his clerical preferments in favour of his curate, who is a worthy man with a large family. Sophia is happy in having her excellent grandfather constantly with her, and in being not only countenanced by his presence, but guided by his experience and wisdom. She calls him the object of her *tendereſt* care, and *warmeſt* affection; but her intimates have lately been observed to smile in a very significant manner when ſhe uſes thoſe words; and it is whiſpered, that a *certain* noble officer is determined to make her ſpeedily ſign a public recantation of this abſolute and excluſive preference of an aged divine. Candour muſt however allow, that if Miſs Glanville's

ville's heart should change its *object*, she is still constant to the *qualities* that she first admired. The same manly virtue, rational piety, unshaken honour, and unboasting goodness which she formerly *venerated* in Mr. Brudenell, she now *loves* in Lord Selborne.

THE END.

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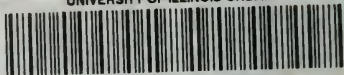
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